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WILLIAM III.

WILLIAM THE THIRD

AND

THE DEFENCE OF HOLLAND

1672–4

BROUVILLE COLLEGE

By

MARY CAROLINE TREVELYAN

With Maps and Illustrations

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
LONDON · NEW YORK · TORONTO
1930

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO. LTD.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.4
6 OLD COURT HOUSE STREET, CALCUTTA
53 NICOL ROAD, BOMBAY
36A MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
55 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
221 EAST 20TH STREET, CHICAGO
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To
G. M. T.
and
J. P. T.

PREFACE

This book is an attempt to tell a story, deeply significant in its bearing on the history of the later seventeenth century, and not without dramatic interest in some of its episodes. Very little has been written in English about the War of 1672–3 save from a naval or a diplomatic point of view. The actual circumstances of Louis XIV's conquest of a third of the Dutch Republic, the resistance offered by the Dutch, and the important part played throughout by the young William III, then in his twenty-second year, are but imperfectly comprehended in England, for lack hitherto of an historian. To the English, the period dealt with in this book was one of critical importance, not only because it marked the extreme point of Charles II's submission to the ascendancy of Louis XIV, in diplomatic, financial and religious affairs, but also because it reveals for the first time the character, aims and abilities of William III, Prince of Orange—our future deliverer from the evil policies of James II. No monarch in English history, save perhaps Elizabeth and Charles I, has aroused such controversy and such partisanship as William III, both with regard to his private character and his public work. One thing about him is, however, indisputable; to him the English owe the change from a monarchy which was attempting an absolutism on the French pattern, combined with the compulsory introduction of Roman Catholicism as the State religion, to a monarchy dependent upon Parliament not only for supplies of money, but for its claim to the throne and for the conditions of its rule, and bound to support the Anglican Church, for ever divorced though she was from her old doctrine of the Divine

Right of Kings. To William III also we owe a diplomatic *volte-face* of incalculable importance to our whole naval, economic and colonial history of the eighteenth century—the change from dependence on France to opposition to her policies and ambitions—opposition which meant, for the first twenty-three years after the Revolution of 1688, almost unceasing war on land and sea.

The man who undertook the change from the old type of English monarchy to the new, and wrought the revolution in our diplomacy, was not the tool of politicians or religious enthusiasts. He was a man of certain fixed ideas and aims, to the accomplishment of which he devoted his life with unwavering perseverance and single-mindedness. His genius lay mainly in the extraordinary development of these qualities. The origin of those ideas and aims, which in brief amounted to the curbing of the ambitions of the French monarchy through the joint efforts of England and the Dutch Republic, are to be found in the period which I have chosen to study, and this it is that gives it its chief interest to English readers.

His birth, his ancestry, his education as ' child of state ' by the watchful Dutch oligarchs who saw in him a potential tyrant of the Stuart type, throw much light on many of the qualities of his mind and character, and some account has therefore been given of them in the earlier chapters of this book. It should never be forgotten that his mother was the Princess Royal of England, the eldest daughter of Charles I. But the events of 1672 made William III what he was—gave him his life-work to do and fired him with a purpose that nothing could change till death.

The invasion of the Dutch Republic by Louis XIV threatened Europe with a new monster of domination, more dangerous even than Spain had been a century before, because better organised and more aggressive of deliberate purpose. As William the Silent in 1572 had set himself to resist the reconquest of the Netherlands by Spain, so his great-grandson in 1672 took upon himself to defend the very same territories

from France. The terror of the invasion brought on a domestic revolution in Holland, putting an end to the government of the city oligarchs which had lasted since the death of William II in 1650, and restored the young William III to the Stadtholderate occupied by his ancestors since the days of William the Silent. William the Silent created the free State of the Dutch Republic, and there his work was cut short; William III not only saved that State from destruction, but became in so doing the soul and leader of a European coalition against Louis XIV, whose ambitions were by no means confined to the extirpation of the Dutch.

In this year also Louis showed his intention, not merely of conquering, but of conquering in the name of the Roman Catholic Church. It is true that his aims were political before they were religious, and that his fanatical inclinations had not yet reached their height. He had not yet exterminated his own Huguenot subjects by means of dragonnades. But, wherever he came in his new conquests, he established by armed force the Roman Catholic ritual in churches where the Genevan use had been practised for a century, and demanded its free exercise in all Dutch churches as one of the conditions on which he would grant the Republic peace. It was therefore not only as the destroyer of the Republic's liberty but of her religion also that he was resisted by William. William, during the course of his life, numbered many Roman Catholic powers among his allies, including Spain, the Empire and the Pope, but he was in a real sense the defender of Continental Protestantism against its most formidable enemy.

It was William III's misfortune that in resisting Louis XIV he was obliged to transform the peace-loving, mercantile Dutch State into a warrior nation supporting a large standing army. There was no help for it; it was on the fields of Flanders that Louis had to be met and held at bay. The breakdown of the Dutch defences before Louis's onslaught in 1672, the uselessness for many months of the long-neglected army, the desperate resort to inundations which alone saved

the province of Holland from destruction, proved the necessity of better land-defences. The Dutch governing-class disliked nothing more than spending money on a standing army—it was unproductive and might prove dangerous to the State—but William III would not let his own country be behindhand in the matter of armaments, and throughout his career as Stadtholder he insisted on the maintenance of Dutch military as well as naval power. For this reason he was never popular, though always respected, by the typical Dutch politicians. Yet, after his death in 1702, this policy, so uncongenial to the Dutch Republic, had to be continued as the condition of its independence.

It was in 1672 that William learnt the importance and the difficulty of obtaining the support of England. Louis entered the war with Charles II as his faithful ally, who bore the brunt of the war at sea. Without that naval strength of England on his side, William knew that the defeat of Louis would be well-nigh hopeless. This is the secret of his passionate endeavours to win over Charles II from his alliance with France. The war taught him the impossibility of inducing Charles to adopt an independent line of policy. From the English point of view indeed, the story of the Third Dutch War is humiliating enough. The one hopeful event in the degrading foreign policy of the Stuarts—the Triple Alliance of 1668—is made light of by Charles, and the 'French adventure,' so dangerous not only to our foreign reputation, but to our home liberties, is embarked upon instead, by means of secret intrigues.

Towards the regeneration of English foreign policy William devoted his life almost as much as towards the defeat of Louis. The extraordinary proceedings of 1688 were resorted to only after every other method of appeal had failed, and when the constitutional and religious situation in England had become desperate.

The years 1672–4 are therefore the critical years in the life of a man whose influence on English history and on the

fate of Europe in the later years of the seventeenth century was of incalculable importance.

The writing of this book has been rendered possible by the kindness of many friends and advisers. To Professor Geyl I am indebted for valuable advice at the outset. Dr. Japikse, then Keeper of the Rijksarchief at the Hague, enabled me to study there under the happiest circumstances, and I am deeply obliged to him for the interest he showed in my plans for the book, and for the kindness with which he read and commented upon one of the chapters.

To Count Godard Bentinck of Amerongen I am beholden for the extraordinary kindness with which he lent me a series of letters from his private archives—viz. the letters of Margaret Turnor to her husband, the Heer van Amerongen, written during the critical days of the French Invasion in 1672. One of my difficulties has been the lack of private correspondence bearing on the events, so that this loan was of peculiar value. Count Bentinck has kindly allowed me to make quotations from them.

The patience and sympathy shown by Mr. John Dower in the somewhat exacting task of map-making have been unfailing; I thank him also for his comments on the text.

I thank Mr. Keith Feiling for his kindness in writing me a letter with helpful remarks on the policy of Charles II, and Mr. Cockerell, of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, for helping me to find illustrations in the Print Room of the Museum.

My visits to Holland have been rendered delightful and romantic by expeditions to many of the scenes of events and actions of the years 1672–3. I should like to thank many Dutch friends for their graciousness to me in making these expeditions possible. To Mijnheer and Mevrouw van der Venn I am indebted for more than one visit to Gelderland and historic spots therein; to Count and Countess van Pallandt of Rosendaal, for allowing me to look at maps in

their library and enabling me to study the old course of the Rhine; and to the Baroness van Heeckeren van Kell of Rhederoord for enabling me to see the River Ijssel and many places of interest in its neighbourhood.

Finally I should like to express my affectionate thanks to Mrs. Robert Trevelyan for the trouble she took in introducing me to her friends in Holland.

Note

Unless otherwise stated, the edition of De Witt's letters quoted in the footnotes is that published by R. Fruin and N. Japikse in four volumes, in the publications of the Historisch Genootschap te Utrecht, under the title *Brieven van Johan de Witt*.

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WILLIAM III AND THE DEFENCE OF HOLLAND, 1672–4

INTRODUCTION

A PICTURE by Rembrandt once occupied one of the noble chimney-pieces of the great Stadhuis of Amsterdam, representing the youthful son of Q. Fabius Maximus as consul of the Roman Republic, sitting proudly on his horse with helmeted head, while he bids his aged father dismount and stand aside to let him pass.[1] The son bears office in the State—that is the secret of his superiority. The rulers of Amsterdam chose that old Roman story as typical of their own reverence—not for titled rank or wealth—but for political office, for government, for themselves as governors, not of their city only, but of the State.

The Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century[2] was strictly undemocratic in its constitution. Government there was the monopoly of a class—educated and destined from childhood to the task of governing, first in the native city, later in the Assembly of the provincial States. The seven provinces which formed the Republic—Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Gelderland, Friesland, Groningen and Overijssel—were each a separate entity, united in a loose federal band, whose organ was the States-General of the United Provinces.[3]

[1] Exhibited in the Dutch Exhibition, 1929, at Burlington House. The picture was removed from the Stadhuis and sold in 1808, and replaced by an inferior one of the same subject.

[2] I am indebted for the remarks in this Introduction largely to the early chapters of Dr. Japikse's *Johan De Witt*.

[3] The district between the Maas and the borders of the Spanish Netherlands, including the towns of Breda and 's Hertogenbosch, was conquered from Spain during the Thirty Years' War. It was known as 'The Generality,' and was administered by the States-General. See Map I.

That body consisted of deputies from the various provincial States who were allowed no freedom of action, but were bound to consult their 'principals' on every matter of importance, and to make no proposals save as they were directed by their own States. The business of the States-General was concerned mainly with foreign affairs, peace and war; all financial and 'home' matters were dealt with by the separate provinces acting quite independently. The provincial States are therefore of far more social and political significance. The province of Holland, being in commercial wealth and naval strength superior to the other provinces, far outweighed them in political importance, and it is with her that our main business lies. The great Dutch statesmen with whom we shall have to do—De Witt, Van Beverningk, Van Beuningen, Valckenier—were all of them Hollanders, and some understanding of the conditions under which they lived and worked is necessary to an appreciation of the critical years 1672–4.

In visualising the governing class of Holland we must banish from our minds any idea of a society of country gentlemen—representatives of 'the landed interest.' No such body as the English House of Commons—no such people as the knights of the shire—existed in Holland. The greatness of Holland lay in her towns, and her politicians were all town-bred men with a great deal of citizen as well as provincial patriotism. The old landed nobility survived, it is true, and was represented in the States, but trade and rapid colonial growth in the first half of the seventeenth century quickly gave the towns and the town-governments the real importance in the State. The great cities of Holland—Amsterdam, Haarlem, Rotterdam, Gouda, Leiden—were achieving in peace the perfection of their stately beauty while France was being rent by the Fronde and England by the disasters of the Civil War. That beauty fortunately still survives almost unimpaired in most of them. Many of the high gabled

houses on the Heerengracht and Prinsengracht in Amsterdam, with their large windows, double flights of stone steps and handsome doors, suggest the town-houses of noblemen in London in the eighteenth century, save that they are often larger and more imposing. Actually they belonged to a town-aristocracy, to rich merchants or to some family of 'Regenten' (rulers), who boasted a long tradition of public service, and were as proud of themselves and as contemptuous of, or at least indifferent to, the lower orders of society as any titled nobles could have been. 'While the burgher is a small 'man, he must be treated as a small man,' was the dictum of Jacob de Witt, father of the famous John, and John de Witt himself held that 'unqualified and mean persons have no 'place in the government.'

By the seventeenth century indeed there was no place left even in the city governments for 'small men.' In each city the little hold which the workers' gilds had had in the election of burgomasters and other officials had entirely disappeared, and the 'Regeering' or 'Vroedschap' of each town was a self-electing oligarchy, independent of all control save such as the Stadtholder Prince of Orange could exercise in pricking burgomasters and other officials from a list submitted to him. In most cities the 'Regeering' was confined to the members of a few families. It in turn deputed two or three of its members to represent it in the States of Holland. Dordrecht was ruled by about six families, chief among whom were the De Witts and the Van Beverens. The De Witts had made a comfortable fortune during the sixteenth century in a family timber business; Jacob De Witt wound it up and devoted his life to local and state politics. He held various offices in his native city, and represented Dordrecht on several occasions in the States of Holland.

His son, John De Witt, who stands for all time as 'the 'perfect Hollander,' the best type of Dutch politician—incorruptible, steadfast, laborious, ever thinking of and for the 'dear fatherland' before all else—was born at Dordrecht

in 1625. He was educated at Leiden, where his skill in mathematics early distinguished him. His political capabilities are indeed ascribed by an early author to the fact that he was 'subtle in philosophy,' 'a second Euclid in mathe-'matics.' Knowledge of politics and political methods he imbibed as a matter of course from the family circle. He never seems to have contemplated any other career than that of politics. His training followed the usual course for all young men of his class—the 'Grand Tour' in the France of Mazarin and the England of the latter stages of the Civil War—followed by practice as an advocate in the Court of Holland at the Hague. But whereas his elder brother Cornelis soon returned to Dordrecht to take up the usual round of official duties in his native town, John preferred to remain in the Hague, in touch with national rather than with local politics, though not as yet holding any office, until a lucky chance offered him the Pensionaryship of his native city in the winter of 1650. It was a post which carried with it *ipso facto* membership of the Dordrecht deputation in the States of Holland. At the age of twenty-five, therefore, De Witt was a member of that body which in reality ruled the destinies of the Dutch Republic. During the two and a half years in which he held this post he devoted himself almost entirely to political work in the capital—very little to local business. In 1652, during the embassy of Adriaan Paauw, Grand Pensionary or first minister of Holland, to England at the time of the war with the Commonwealth, De Witt, as Pensionary of the senior city of Holland, took over his work. He was now in direct correspondence with several of the States' ambassadors in various lands. Already his remarkable powers had gained for him a reputation beyond that of any other Dutch statesman. In December 1653, Paauw died. De Witt was elected in his place to the Grand Pensionaryship, in spite of the rival claims of the older and more experienced Ruyl, Pensionary of Haarlem.

De Witt remained for the rest of his life Grand Pensionary

of Holland. It was a post of mediaeval origin, which had first attained political importance when the death of William the Silent had thrown the young Dutch Republic upon its own resources for leadership. Then John of Oldenbarnevelt had made the office powerful and had exercised various functions therein; after his death it had sunk again into minor importance, while the Stadtholders, Maurice and Frederick Henry, sons of William the Silent, wielded the chief political power. Now again the death of William II, Stadtholder, Prince of Orange, and only son of Frederick Henry, left the State without a head, save for his infant son, William III, whom the States were careful not to acknowledge for the present. De Witt was in capacity by far the most outstanding politician of his time, and in his hands the office became more important than it had ever been before. He was chief spokesman and manager of the business of the States of Holland, and was always present as representing Holland in the States-General and on other permanent and occasional committees. Both the financial and legal positions of the province of Holland were known to him, as to an expert civil servant or crown lawyer. Most important of all, De Witt gradually appropriated to himself almost the whole business of Foreign Secretary—not for Holland only, but for the whole Republic. It was he who corresponded with ambassadors, he who first opened and read their letters. It was he who, in his office in the Hague, directed the course of peace conferences and framed treaties with foreign envoys. As time went on, this duty—very largely self-imposed—became the most significant and the most absorbing of all.

For close on twenty years De Witt ruled the politics of the Dutch Republic almost without a rival, because no man could vie with him in capacity. The long minority of William III checked the growth of the only other influence in the State which could have rivalled his—that of the Stadtholder Prince of Orange. The power of the Stadtholders is a curious

phenomenon in the history of the Dutch State. The office was of ancient origin, and had been in the days of the Spaniards a sort of viceroyship for the Emperor and the King of Spain. It carried with it a seat in the States-General and in the States of the province to which it was attached, and the power of appointing burgomasters and members of the municipal councils in the cities of that province.

After his break with Spain, William the Silent continued to be Stadtholder of Holland and Zeeland, but his sovereigns were the provincial States in each province instead of the King of Spain. It was a curious position, for, though the States elected him, he continued to exercise his old powers of appointment to the city councils or 'Vroedschappen,' and hence he could indirectly influence the composition of the States themselves. He was the servant of the States, but a servant who exercised in his own right certain sovereign powers. William the Silent left behind him two warlike sons, whose military services the struggling State could ill afford to dispense with while Spain was yet so formidable. Maurice and Frederick Henry succeeded one another as Princes of Orange, Stadtholders of Holland and Zeeland, and military heads of the Dutch army, completed the liberation of the Republic from Spain, and later caused her to take an active part in the Thirty Years' War. But, as Dutch commerce and wealth increased, as the land frontiers of the State were secured by the capture of fortresses and the power of Spain declined, the oligarchy looked more and more coldly on war and war expenditure. The rich merchant class with whom they associated and whose views they shared—whose successful efforts in trade and colonisation made Holland the envy of the world—hated war, especially land war, as wasteful and unproductive. The Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years War in 1648, was regarded by the States of Holland as absolutely final; there must be no more fighting—the army must be drastically reduced. Now, however, they came up against the will of a hot-headed and unscrupulous young man—the young

Stadtholder, William II, son of Frederick Henry, who succeeded to his father's offices in 1647. William II, during his short Stadtholderate of three years, endeavoured to force the Republic into war, first with the English Commonwealth on behalf of Charles II, to whose sister Mary he was married, and then with Spain, that he might conquer Antwerp and partition the Spanish Netherlands between himself and France.

The States of Holland, on the other hand, were determined to preserve that peace wherein lay their prosperity. William II's ambitions would have troubled them very little if, in his capacity as Captain-General of the Republic, he had not tried to maintain a larger army than they were prepared to pay for. The province of Holland, which supplied an overwhelming proportion of the troops of the Federal Army, refused to vote the sums William II required. She even threatened to disband that part of the army for which she was responsible. William II saw his plans hopelessly thwarted and had recourse to a *coup d'état*. On July 30, 1650, he arrested five of the leading deputies of the States of Holland and imprisoned them in the Castle of Loevenstein. Among them was Jacob De Witt, who never forgave the insult.[1] Meanwhile the army, under the command of some of the Prince's trusted friends, was hastening across the heaths of Utrecht in the rainy darkness towards the gates of Amsterdam.

That mighty city, whose harbour received and sent forth again half the shipping of the world, had been foremost in opposition to the Stadtholder. If he could have it in his power the game would be won. By a series of accidents and mistakes the surprise attack failed; Amsterdam was warned in time; its Burgomasters threatened to open the sluices and inundate the surrounding country, thus imperilling the entire army of the State. 'The city,' they said, 'will make use of 'the weapons which God and Nature have given her.'

Her victory, however, was not complete. In order to pacify the Prince and rid the neighbourhood of troops by a

[1] From this incident the faction of politicians, who were in future most strenuously opposed to the power of the Stadtholder, were given the name of 'the Loevenstein party' or 'the Loevensteiners.'

less expensive method than inundation, she consented to his demands about the maintenance of the army. The Dutch oligarchy would do all in their power to prevent a war with Spain, but civil war was a horror to be bought off at any price.

Throughout the month of August 1650, William II, in his secret correspondence with Mazarin, held out hopes of war and alliance which were continually frustrated by the more cautious diplomacy of the Dutch 'Regenten.' Nothing short of a successful *coup d'état*, indeed, could have plunged the Republic into war. William II's powers did not extend to the making of treaties and the decision of peace or war. Having failed to persuade or terrorise the States, he was reduced to mere intrigue, and even that was cut short in November 1650, by his death from smallpox at the age of twenty-four. A week later his young widow gave birth to a son—the future William III.

The relations of the Dutch oligarchy to William III were coloured throughout his youth by the memory of what his father had tried to do. It became their aim to exclude him from the offices and powers which his father and grandfather had held. Henceforward the idea of a 'head of the State,' whose ambitions might extend to monarchical or tyrannical power, became abhorrent to the rulers of Holland. Their political doctrines on this subject became very dogmatically formulated during the next few years, the period of the 'vrijheid' or 'liberty' from the control of a single person in State affairs. With the development of these doctrines, as we shall see, John De Witt himself had a great deal to do. Their influence on the upbringing of William III, and indirectly on the home and foreign policy of the Dutch Republic, were important and far-reaching.

An immediate consequence of William II's behaviour was a total refusal on the part of Holland to do anything further for the exiled House of Stuart. The Princess Mary, who lived for the hope of her brother's restoration to the English throne, found that the States would give her no help. A common Calvinism, a

common dislike of monarchy, gave the Dutch and English Republics some inducement to live in friendship, though the Dutch had strongly disapproved of the execution of Charles I, and trade rivalry was soon to drive the two States into war. Cromwell's bold design for a united Anglo-Dutch Calvinist State found little sympathy among the aristocratic oligarchy of Holland. Cromwell's militarism, his passionate Puritanism, did not attract them and might involve them in disastrous wars. But they were prepared to help him in keeping out the House of Stuart, all the more because of its relationship to their own House of Orange, now in bad odour. In 1653 they forbade any of the wandering clan to come within the borders of the province of Holland.

Among the common people—the 'small folk' for whom De Witt and his friends felt a patrician contempt—the House of Orange never lost its popularity. It had supplied them with an element which the oligarchy, with all its dignity, could not give, the element of royalty. Frederick Henry had kept royal state, built palaces, married his son to the Princess of England and his daughter to the Elector of Brandenburg. Moreover, the memory of William the Silent, 'father of the fatherland,' never faded from the warm hearts of the Dutch. They loved to sing his song, the 'Wilhelmus,' and to fly his orange flag. When after 1650, the Government forbade all Orange demonstrations, and took away the flags from the burgher companies, there was bitterness and resentment which increased as the young Prince, whom they adored, grew older. The system of government which De Witt represented was finally overthrown in 1672 by the common people, who demanded in its place not political privileges for themselves, but the restoration of the Prince to the dignities of his forefathers.

The Dutch Republic was, after 1618, officially a Calvinist State, in which none but conformers to the established religion might hold political or local office, but it contained a very large Roman Catholic element, who were allowed to practise

their worship in private unmolested. The Calvinist Church was a popular affair, in the running of which the smaller citizens found an outlet for their organising energies which was denied to them in politics. The preachers were nearly all humble folk, the committees of elders in each church being mostly of the small shopkeeper class. All education, both in schools and universities, lay in the hands of the Church. The 'Regenten,' while conforming to the State religion, were not always favourably regarded by the preachers. They were not anti-Catholic or anti-Spanish enough for these fiery gospellers. They refused to banish Roman priests; they insisted on living in amity with Spain. And, if the Church protested against the politics of the Holland 'Regenten,' the Government sometimes took action. De Witt would brook no ecclesiastical thunders. In 1660 he took measures to prevent the appearance in Medemblik of a fanatical preacher, Van der Velde, who was openly preaching an end to the Treaty of Westphalia and a new war with Spain. De Witt himself was a deeply religious man, almost a saint in his simple reliance on the God who revealed to him his duty and strengthened him to perform it. To his friends he wrote with quiet dignity of the faith that was in him. 'If 'your trouble can in a measure be set at rest,' he wrote to an anxious relative on the eve of his departure to join the fleet in 1666, 'by my untroubled resolution, I can truly assure 'you that I have never from the beginning had an anxious 'thought about the matter; but being assured that I have 'chosen right, I will, trusting in God, await the result in comfort 'and without any anxious hesitations—if indeed His Divine 'Majesty gives me grace to continue in my present steadfast-'ness, for which I shall fervently pray to Him.' Whatever the political differences between John De Witt and William III, they certainly shared the same religious inspiration, though to De Witt were given richer powers of expression and a more serene temperament.

CHAPTER I

The Youth of William III, 1650–1668

If William III inherited from his father the blood of William the Silent and Louise de Coligny, the ancestry bequeathed him by his mother was no less distinguished. Mary, Princess Royal of England, was the first of the three English Princesses who were to mate with the Princes of Orange.[1] She was married to William II as a child in 1641, and thus united the misfortunes of the House of Stuart with the politics of the House of Orange—a union fraught with little advantage to either, and deeply distrusted by the States of Holland.

This daughter of Charles I and Henrietta Maria, and grand-daughter of Henri IV of France, has left no gleam of a brilliant and adventurous personality behind her, like that of her sister Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans. But in devotion to Charles II and his brothers she was as enthusiastic, if not as useful, as her sister. To have them about her or to follow their wanderings from court to court was her one delight. In attractive and graceful qualities she was singularly lacking. She hated the Dutch and never exerted herself to win their affection: her manners to all but her brothers and personal servants were offensive and haughty. She quarrelled with her husband's family and friends, and was in a state of almost ceaseless warfare with the Dowager Princess, Amalia, widow of Prince Frederick Henry. Amalia accused her of being unscrupulous in sacrificing her son's property and fortunes to the inexhaustible needs of her exiled family. Yet it is

[1] The other marriages were: William III to Mary, daughter of James, Duke of York (James II), 1677; William IV to Anne, daughter of George II, 1734.

easy to be too hard on one who had been nurtured in the school of the Divine Right of Royalty, whose family had suffered misfortunes so cruel that the most hardened Dutch Republicans were horrified at the daring of the English regicides. Her father, an anointed king, had died on a scaffold: such an event, to one of her upbringing, must have seemed to defy the very laws of nature. Small wonder that her energetic, if narrow and hard mind, was obsessed during the remainder of her life with but one idea—the restoration of her brother to his lawful throne. Her affection for him outran the bounds of reason. 'I must assure you that I 'still obey all your commands,' she wrote to Charles in 1658, 'except that of loving him (William) though he is my only 'child, above all things in this world, as long as you are in it.' Surely never man was more devotedly loved and served than was Charles by his two sisters. Doubtless his misfortunes, and his ultimate triumph, invested him in their eyes with an ideal lustre.

William Henry was born on November 14, 1650, eight days after William II had succumbed to smallpox, the disease which was to work such havoc with the family he left behind. The child was born in the Stadtholder's Quarter[1] at the Hague in a room hung with heaviest mourning; he was tended by women in immense black hoods. Two months later he was christened at the Groote Kerk at the Hague. Even at his christening the child's political future was in a manner shadowed forth by the mixed assembly of Royal and Republican personages who accompanied him to the font. A queen held him in her arms—Elizabeth of Bohemia, Electress Palatine—accompanied by his grandmother, Princess Amalia of Orange; but his sponsors were the States of Holland and the States-General of the United Provinces. The name that

[1] Part of the 'Binnenhof,' the group of buildings in the centre of the Hague in which the States-General and the States of Holland had their Assembly Rooms. The Stadtholder's Quarter is still standing, next to the noble block containing the Hall of the States of Holland (now the First Chamber of the Dutch Parliament), which was built in 1650–3.

was above every name in the minds of the Hollanders was given to him—William—and to this was added Henry, after his grandfather Frederick Henry. It is significant that his mother was not present at the christening, and that she had already quarrelled violently with Princess Amalia on the subject of his name, which she had insisted must be Charles William. Her brother James, Duke of York, at first announced his intention of accompanying the baptismal procession, but later withdrew. The baby was thus spared the irony of being sponsored by his future father-in-law whom he was to supplant on the throne of England.

The unseemly quarrels which took place between William's mother and grandmother on the subject of his guardianship were so noisy and prolonged that they tended to obscure the more important measures taken with regard to him by the States-General.[1] Mary was concerned to obtain control of the hereditary Marquisates of Veere and Flushing, in Zeeland, the Barony of Breda and the Principality of Orange in the South of France, in order, as her mother-in-law did not scruple to say, to squander their revenues on her brothers: the States of Holland had to deal with the more far-reaching political questions of the Stadtholderate and Captain-Generalship. Hitherto the Princes of Orange had succeeded one another in these offices by appointment without much difficulty, but the events of the year 1650 had made a profound impression on the 'Regenten' of the province of Holland. In the Assembly of the States-General which met on January 17, 1651, the Deputies of Holland persuaded the other provinces that the Captain-Generalship must for the present remain in abeyance. The injury inflicted on the baby by this deprivation—which at present was only called a postponement—was not very grievous, and his ambitious cousins, candidates for

[1] See Jorissen, *Mémoires de C. Huygens*, Preface, *passim*; Baroness van Zuylen van Nyevelt, *Court Life in the Dutch Republic*, chap. xi. Mary claimed the sole guardianship of her son, but was obliged to share it with Princess Amalia and the Elector of Brandenburg, his uncle.

the Captain-Generalship, William Frederick, Stadtholder of Friesland, Maurice of Nassau, the 'Brazilian,' and the great nobleman Brederode, were passed over without a mention. The States of Holland also arrogated to themselves the chief function of the Stadtholder—the appointment of burgomasters and magistrates in the towns—and passed it on to the city councils in all the cities represented in the States of Holland. Nor was it likely that the great province would readily surrender so important a duty. The Stadtholderate was as good as permanently abolished.[1]

The situation created in the army by the abeyance of the supreme command was curious. The army was technically under the control of the Council of State, the permanent committee of the States-General, but the troops were raised and paid by the various provinces, who severally controlled the movements of the troops for which they paid. After the death of William II 'particular care was taken,' says Dr. Japikse, 'to render impossible the mobilisation of a 'large force without the co-operation of the provinces and 'even of the towns. Thus a repetition of the attack on 'Amsterdam could be avoided.'[2] Such arrangements for preventing civil war might prove disastrous (as indeed they did) in the event of an invasion by a foreign Power. In England the general hatred of a 'standing army' had brought Strafford to the block ten years previously and was to make Cromwell and James II the most unpopular rulers in our history. In the Dutch Republic the fear of the military was not endemic, and the governing class preferred to maintain a small army, provided it could not interfere with provincial and still more with civic autonomy.

Before William was four years old, the Act of Seclusion stood between him and the 'dignities of his forefathers.' That Act, by which the States of Holland undertook 'never-'more to choose the Prince of Orange or any of his house as 'Stadtholder or Admiral of their province, nor suffer, for as 'much as the advice of their province is concerned, that he

[1] Japikse, *Johan de Witt*, p. 37. [2] *Ibid.* p. 38.

'shall ever be elected to the Captain-Generalship over the 'military forces of the State,' was not, as might be supposed, the logical result of the Resolution of January 1651, but a condition exacted by Cromwell when the Peace of Westminster put an end to the first Dutch War in 1654. It is an extraordinary example of one powerful State accepting a serious limitation of its domestic freedom of action at the hands of another. The conduct of the whole affair is, besides, an apt illustration of the extent to which the Province of Holland outweighed all the others in power and influence.

The demand for a total and permanent exclusion of the Prince from all offices originated in England, not in Holland. Cromwell hoped thereby still further to lessen the influence of the Stuarts, and pressed it on the unwilling Dutch Ambassadors during the autumn of 1653 without success, while De Witt endeavoured to secure a modification of the demand. He finally submitted, in April 1654, to a total exclusion as far as the province of Holland alone was concerned. It is probable, however, that De Witt's objections to the idea arose from the circumstances rather than from the Act itself. To exclude the Prince of Orange because Cromwell demanded it was to surrender the most important of provincial liberties at the dictation of a foreign Power. It was easy enough to defend the exclusion, as he did defend it in his famous 'Deductie' of July 1654, against accusations of unconstitutional procedure, 'ingrati-'tude' to the House of Orange and other objections as insincere as they were shallow, but the fact remained that De Witt, the 'perfect Hollander,' for the sake of what he undoubtedly considered the best interests of his province and of the precious 'liberty' of which he, as Pensionary of Holland, was now the chief representative, had 'placed the 'freedom of action of the Holland government under English 'control.' [1]

The whole affair was carried through with the greatest secrecy, it might almost be said with crafty cunning on De

[1] Japikse, *Johan de Witt*, p. 75.

Witt's part. Cromwell's original demand had been the exclusion of the Prince and 'all his house' from all offices in the Republic, by each and all of the provinces, but when this proved impossible he consented to an exclusion by Holland alone, from such offices as lay in her donation, to be secured by an Act separate from the Peace Treaty. De Witt did not even reveal to the States of Holland what was on foot until he heard that the Peace of Westminster had been signed on April 15, 1653. On April 28 the States of Holland met, and by May 4 all opposition to the passing of an Act of Seclusion was overcome. De Witt hastily drew up an 'Act,' retiring into an antechamber close to the Assembly Hall for the purpose: his thought could always express itself quickly on paper and the document was despatched to England next day.

A man of De Witt's patriotism, shrewdness and independence of character is here seen treading in tortuous paths to attain what appears a very doubtful advantage. He would never have acted thus if he had not thought highly of the 'exclusion' policy considered on its merits. During the war he had been constantly faced with 'Orange movements'—popular demands, enforced by rioting and intimidation, for the appointment of the tiny Prince as 'eminent head' of the forces of the Republic by sea and land. 'Hardly one man in 'a thousand is free from this opinion,' he wrote in December 1652. In Holland itself the towns were restive—De Witt and his family walked in fear of their lives—and it was only by at once opening negotiations for peace that De Witt prevented Haarlem from bringing forward a proposal in the States of Holland in favour of the Prince.

In these circumstances it is not unnatural that an extension of the temporary exclusion of January 1651 should recommend itself to him. He saw in it the only security for the continuation of the system of oligarchical government, unfettered by a 'head,' which he had so much at heart. His vision in this matter, as indeed in all that in future concerned

his dealings with the Prince of Orange, was lacking in understanding of the realities of the situation. Nothing but a total banishment of the House of Orange from the country could possibly have given the 'vrijheid' complete security. As long as the Prince was in Holland, no amount of paper 'exclusions' could dethrone him from the position he held by right of inheritance in the hearts and minds of the people. De Witt's later attempts to educate him as the 'servant' of the oligarchy were foredoomed to failure because they were founded on ideals which existed only in his own mind instead of on a right interpretation of the psychology of the Dutch nation.

His public justification of the Act of Seclusion—the 'Deductie' which he wrote in July 1654—is a State paper of the highest importance for understanding De Witt's political creed. In it he proclaims the great principle of 'provincial autonomy' which was the corner-stone of his argument, and the mainspring of his actions both then and thereafter. 'Each of the provinces,' he declares—and none dared contradict him—'separately possesses the absolute 'and sovereign disposal over the creation of Stadtholders in 'their province, without being bound to listen to the advice 'of anyone else.' Had not the States of Holland before now 'excluded' governors of whom they disapproved—Philip II namely, and Anjou? If they had not done so, 'we should 'all at this hour be sitting in miserable subjection.' Holland had a perfect right 'for the satisfaction of the Lord Pro-'tector of the Republic of England' to pass such an Act on her own account. If she had refused, he contended, the war would have continued. Possibly, but this is the weakest spot in his argument, for the States-General had already signed the peace. His doctrine was: 'the respective 'provinces, each separately, are permitted to contribute any-'thing of their own for the furthering of peace with other 'lands, even without communication with the confederates' (*i.e.* the other provinces of the Union).

As for the morality of abolishing government by 'heads,' he contended that the 'heads' themselves and not the lack of them had in the past been the causes of 'dissensions.' Here he referred almost in terms to the events of 1650. 'Heads' have before now set their own interest above that of the Commonwealth. Against such behaviour 'good Governors, 'who hold the welfare of the people for the highest law, 'deferring more to the peace of their conscience than to the 'authority of such heads,' feel obliged to protest. This 'peace of conscience' was, he said, 'like a metal wall.' What then, for him, was the bond between the provinces, if it was not to be found in a single person? Intermarriage of Governors and people, he replied, commerce, 'a continual 'assembly of Ambassadors' (*i.e.* the States-General) and above all, the immutable heritage of 'one and the same religion.' Anything that departs from these grounds and seeks to establish the country's welfare on other foundations can be nothing but harmful and dangerous, and if continued must overthrow the welfare, the freedom and the privileges of the United Netherlands.

The confident and even defiant tone of the 'Deductie' made it highly unpalatable to the other provinces. It was all very well to talk of intermarriage and a common religion, but all knew that Holland spoke through De Witt's mouth as mistress of the Republic. If, as De Witt claimed, she had been the saviour of the State in times past, she was its ruler now. And how would young William in future years relish the hint that his father had been of a 'violent humour,' and the tacit comparison of his forbears—William the Silent alone excepted—with Philip II, Anjou and Leicester?

Until the Restoration of his mother's family to their dignities in England, the States concerned themselves very little with William's personal affairs. His mother was absent from him almost every year for long periods, during which

she accompanied her brothers on their wanderings in the Rhinelands or the Spanish Netherlands. She never took the child with her on any of these journeys, less perhaps from indifferent or cold feelings towards him, than from a knowledge that the States would never permit him to cross the frontier in order to associate with his Stuart uncles. But from a distance she wrote her will concerning him to his English governess, Lady Howard.[1] Every day her son was to be 'at home' to visitors—in other words he was to hold a court, surrounded by all his female attendants, while halberdiers were to keep an armed guard in the gallery. Mary was determined that, whatever the intentions of the States concerning him, her son should never forget that he was a Prince.

In 1655 a French Huguenot writing master, Anthoine Raguineau, was engaged to give the boy his first lessons in 'reading, writing and arithmetic.' Next year, during which his mother was constantly absent at the French court, his religious instruction was undertaken by Cornelis Triglandt, a preacher at the Hague. This man was required to instruct the Prince 'in the principles of piety and in some prayers, 'and further to imbue his young years with all Christian 'virtues.'

Cornelis Triglandt remained the chief religious instructor of the Prince for at least ten years. In 1666, when William's education was taken over by the States of Holland, he probably retired or may even have been dismissed with other members of the Prince's entourage. In any case, he celebrated his ten years of office by the publication of a treatise on the 101st Psalm, under the title 'The Idea or Image of a Christian 'Prince.' He addresses William as the hopeful offspring of an illustrious house, destined for great position, even for kingship. Triglandt, an ardent Orangist, had no scruples in referring to William II as 'magnanimous without pride,

[1] See De Witt Huberts, *Jeugdjaren van Stadhouder William III*, p. 36.

'just without cruelty, the pacifier of sedition.' 'Hail then, 'O hope of our Fatherland!' he cries to his pupil, 'and 'have regard to thy ancestors, that thou mayest be of service 'to thy country by their example, and so bear thyself that 'all may justly rejoice that thou wert born.' Such language was a challenge to those in high places who, as was commonly said, would not have been ill-pleased at the Prince's death.[1]

The kingly example which Triglandt set before his pupil was that of David, as set forth in the Psalms, and particularly in the 101st ('I will sing of Mercy and Judgment'). 'Since 'the time that I have been with thee, thou hast not ceased 'often to recite this Psalm, I being witness and instructor, 'and to bring it daily before God's Presence in thy prayers, 'and to apply it to thy own person, that thou mayest govern 'the people committed to thy charge in Justice and Piety, 'after the example of David.'

Triglandt was a man of the people, neither of noble nor 'regent' class. In common with all Dutch preachers he was an accomplished theologian of the Calvinistic school, and he did not fail to impress on his pupil that belief in the utter supremacy of the Divine Will in all human affairs. That faith carried the Prince through disappointments and losses that would otherwise have crushed a nature quick to take the darkest view. William's tendency to pessimism is noticeable throughout his letters to Bentinck and Heinsius. It is only equalled by his extraordinary powers of endurance and belief in the inscrutable but ultimate goodness of God's omnipotent Will.

Until he was nine years old, William lived a secluded life, in the Stadtholder's Quarter (the Binnenhof) of the Hague, or at his mother's palace at Breda, seeing few besides the women of his mother's court, and doomed to wear the long, stiff girls' frocks in which little boys were then imprisoned until they were eight or nine years of age.

[1] Van der Goes, *Briefwisseling*, i. p. 149 (Historisch Genootschap te Utrecht).

Robust health was never to be his. As a tiny child he was often seriously ill; by his twelfth year he was subject to fainting fits and that 'breathlessness' which Burnet later described as asthma.[1] Even when he made a state entry into Utrecht, 'his eyes full of joy and gladness,' the people who welcomed him so lovingly noticed his pallor.[2] He looks at us from his portraits, a white-faced, serious child, with quantities of dark brown hair, and long Stuart eyes, intensely brown, arched with the most delicate eyebrows. The nose 'curved 'like the beak of an eagle' is noticeable even in baby-portraits. The mouth is startling in its dignity and composure; its perfect lips were an inheritance from his grandmother, Henrietta Maria, Queen of England. It is not, indeed, to his Nassau ancestors, 'of highly praiseworthy memory,' that we must turn to trace a likeness. There is a more subtle grace of expression, and, despite the eagle nose, a more feminine refinement of feature, than is to be found in his father, grandfather, or even in the great Silent himself. The attention paid to him as a political personage on whom the hopes of some, the fears of others, were fixed, expressing itself in every detail of his education and in the choice of every one of his tutors and personal attendants, caused William to think, and his thought kept watch behind the still, unchildlike features.[3]

Strangers spoke of him with admiration. 'Il est fort 'beau,' said the French traveller, Monconys, in 1663: 'il a 'le visage long, mais bien formé; l'œil doux, le nez aquilin 'et l'esprit vif: il parle bien et hardiment.' And his observant great-aunt, the Queen of Bohemia, looking at him as he was recovering from his severe illness in 1661, said:

[1] Van der Goes, i. p. 149.
[2] De Witt Huberts, *Jeugdjaren*, p. 71.
[3] The best child-portraits of William III are: (1) In the National Portrait Gallery; (2) at Hampton Court (two portraits); (3) in the Frans Hals Museum at Haarlem (painter unknown); (4) in the Mauritshuis at the Hague (two portraits—one in infancy, the other *aet.* 10, painters unknown). There are also several engravings.

'He mends strangelie: You cannot imagine the witt that he 'has. It is not the witt of a child that is *suffisant*, but of a 'man that doth not pretend to it; he is a very extraordinary 'child, and very good-natured.'

From such descriptions as these there would seem at this time to have been little of the 'disgusting dryness' or the 'cold way' about him, of which Burnet and others complained in after years. The 'witt' of which the Queen of Bohemia speaks has the seventeenth century meaning of brightness or alertness of mind, rather than of a sense of humour, though William was by no means deficient in fun,[1] and in later life his flashes of rather grim humour relieved the otherwise anxious tone of his letters and conversation.

A certain grown-up thoughtfulness and 'carefulness' about things that a child would not usually notice is very soon apparent in him. In 1657 his mother had pawned her jewels in Amsterdam to supply some of her brothers' wants.[2] In January 1661 she died in England, nor do we know whether William was greatly afflicted at the loss. But in May 1661 his grandmother, Princess Amalia of Orange, caused enquiries to be made about reclaiming the jewels, 'for,' writes her secretary Rivet to William's secretary Huygens, then in Paris, 'our little master is constantly talking 'about them.'[3] His pride was already chafing at a transaction which must have been bitter to his mother, and he felt, child though he was, that her memory was dishonoured while they lay in strangers' hands.

Luckily for William, there were those about him who watched him with tender and wise interest, above the clash of family quarrels and the bitterness of political feuds. Among these was Constantijn Huygens, his grandmother's private secretary, whose record of service to the House of Orange

[1] See the account given by Elizabeth Charlotte (Lise-Lotte), later Duchess of Orleans, of her romps with him in 1659.

[2] 'A diamond cut in facets set in a small silver band, weighing 39 carats,' was expected to raise 30,000 gulden (De Witt Huberts, *Jeugdjaren*).

[3] *Briefwisseling van Constantija Huygens*, part v. p. 359. (*Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatien.*)

extended over a long lifetime and descended to his son, who became William's own secretary. When it was decided, in 1659, to send William to live in Leiden,[1] in order to receive instruction from the professors of the University, and to place him at last under the care of a male governor, Huygens spent much time and thought over the momentous change. The gentleman who was appointed governor by the guardians was Frederick, Count of Nassau-Zuylestein, a bastard son of Frederick-Henry. He was the Princess Royal's choice, and was supposed to be very much in the 'English interest,' probably because he was married to an Englishwoman,[2] though the French Ambassador said he had 'l'inclination 'française.' The Dowager, perhaps naturally, disliked him, and acquiesced in the appointment under protest. Probably by her orders, Huygens drew up a careful document[3] containing the principles on which the governor was to conduct the Prince's education, household and general 'façon de 'vivre.' Quaint and formal as much of it seems now, minute as are some of the details, it is yet based on a true understanding of what was wisest for him in this strange, suspicious world in which so much depended on the future character of the Orange 'Prinsken.'

Huygens courageously lifted the problem of William's political future out of the atmosphere of factiousness with which it was surrounded. He was 'in eclipse'; therefore, 'he must seek to re-establish himself in the hearts of the 'people by a mode of living with great and small which will 'oblige his ill-wishers to lose their malice.' Respect for the States comes next in the memorandum to the fear of God. His domestic behaviour must follow the same principles; he

[1] Leiden was a town traditionally Orange in sympathy: it had not acquiesced in the Act of Seclusion, and had recorded a 'note' against it in the Records of the States of Holland. (Blok, *Prins Willem III te Leiden. Bijdragen voor Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis, V. vii.*, 1920.)

[2] He was also supposed to have a loose character: if this was so, he did not succeed in corrupting William, whose morals at fifteen were almost painfully precise. See two letters from him to one of his pages, bidding him beware of wine and women, dated 1665. (De Witt Huberts, *Jeugdjaren*, p. 80.)

[3] 'Instruction pour M. de Zuylestein,' *Mémoires de C. Huygens*, p. 163.

must learn to treat even the lowest servants 'with gentleness 'and patience,' and to receive all visitors with equal courtesy.

His lessons were to include history (which to Huygens seemed the most important), Latin, French, Dutch and English, and arithmetic, leading to mathematics, 'la vraye 'science des Princes.' There is something stately in the way in which he advises the child to compare the doings of his own ancestors with 'the actions of the great men of old, 'and thus ever resort with pleasure to the most illustrious 'scenes of Greek and Roman history.'

How far Zuylestein and William's other instructors carried out these recommendations can be indirectly inferred from the books which his librarian, Antoine Smets, was ordered to provide. There can be no doubt that, while at Leiden, William received a thoroughly Dutch education, in letter and in spirit. The books chosen for him included Van Meteren's great black-letter history of the Fatherland, with its stories of the struggle of people and prince against the Spaniards; other Dutch History books; Jacques Geyn's 'Maniement des Armes,' with its hundreds of fascinating engravings of musket and pike-drill[1]; Plutarch's 'Lives' and Caesar's 'Commentaries.' His military education seems to have been especially well attended to, as far as that was possible from books. As for his ailing body, 'n'étant pas des 'plus robustes,' he was forbidden the more strenuous forms of princely exercise—fencing and tennis. Billiards and gentle riding, walking and dancing were the sum of his physical recreations. A few years later, in 1665, he seems to have grown much stronger: old Huygens, returning from an absence of five years in Paris, wrote 'mon petit maistre est 'devenu si fort et si grand.'[2] This was perhaps the result of a great new joy which, in spite or on account of his ill-health, came into his life in 1661. Since 1656 he had been learning to ride, but he had not till now tasted the delights

[1] First published in 1608, during the wars of Maurice.

[2] William was never tall: Huygens was comparing him with his height five years before.

of hunting. He had been very ill in the early spring of that year,[1] and his grandmother took him with her in April to Cleves, on a visit to the Elector of Brandenburg. There, on May 13, he went out hunting and slew a wild boar, with some help, it would appear, from the Elector. Henceforward to the end of his life the chase was his one beloved recreation. Huygens, in 1665, found him 'madly devoted to it.'

William's quiet life at Leiden was interrupted in 1660 by the Restoration of Charles II, which brought the question of his education and political future again into consideration. It was obvious that, with the Princess Royal's brother on the throne of England, something must be done to prove the goodwill of the States towards his nephew. On the other hand, the danger of increasing the English and Royalist influences around the boy must, if possible, be avoided.

When the news of Charles's recall became known, the States of Holland, who up to now had refused to receive any of the English princes within their frontiers, at once invited him to pay a State visit to the Hague at their expense before embarking for England at Scheveningen. In the 'days of May' therefore, of the year 1660, there met at the Hague a triumphant and happy company of royal personages, who were never to be all together again. Charles II and James Duke of York sat at the same table with Elizabeth of Bohemia, mother of that Hanoverian dynasty which was to supplant the Stuarts on the throne of England. Anne Hyde, the mother of two future queens regnant, was there in waiting to the Princess of Orange, while in the midst of them all there moved a quiet, serious little boy, on whose frail shoulders was to fall the burden of the mighty change from the Old Royalty to the New.[2]

Before he left the Hague, Charles recommended his sister and nephew to the 'hearty favour' of the States of Holland,

[1] Van der Goes, *Briefwisseling*, i. p. 149.

[2] See Everett Green, *Lives of Princesses of England*, vi, 288 *sqq.*, for the best description of the Royal visit to the Hague.

but made no specific demands about William's affairs. On July 23, after Charles had gone, Mary had a conversation with De Witt, in which she urged that her son should be 'designated' Captain-General by the States of Holland, following the example of the other provinces, who had all done so, while Zeeland even nominated him their future Stadtholder.[1] A few days later she was able to present De Witt with a letter from Charles making the same request. De Witt was loath to take so definite a step.[2] His plan was to place William under the 'oversight and care' of the States of Holland, with a view to his being fitted for such offices as the States should in future think fit to confer on him. In this way he hoped to satisfy the Princess and at the same time shape William's character according to the best Republican ideals.

On September 25 he caused a Resolution to be passed in the States of Holland, by which the Prince was to be educated 'as a worthy pledge and instrument of great hope for this 'State for the service of these lands, in the true Christian Re-'formed religion, in all princely virtues and in the knowledge 'of the humours, laws and customs of the country, so as thus 'to be fitted for fulfilling the high charges and employments 'discharged by his forefathers and relatives by the appointment 'of the Lords States of Holland and West Friesland.' On the following day the Act of Seclusion was razed from the Resolutions. Mary saw that this was as far as De Witt would go at present, and acquiesced. From Hellevoetsluys, where she was waiting for the wind that was to carry her to England, she wrote to the States of Holland, committing to their authority the education of the Prince, and suggesting the names of five deputies, including De Witt himself, 'in case it should 'please your Noble Great Mightiness to let your eyes fall upon

[1] Zeeland also designated him First Noble of their province: he was to take his seat on completing his nineteenth year.

[2] See Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives de la Maison d'Orange Nassau*, Series II, v. p. 205. Letter from De Thou describing a conversation with De Witt, who said, 'Il y auroit une grande témérité et imprudence de se précipiter à assurer un enfant 'de neuf ans de charges si importantes. . . . N'ayant que l'espérance d'y parvenir, 'cela le feroit efforcer à s'en rendre digne de les meriter et posséder un jour.'

'them,' who should compose the commission of education. These five were all of the Republican party, and included, besides De Witt, a representative from each of the two most anti-Orange cities, Dordrecht and Amsterdam. Amalia wished the more Orange Leiden to be represented, but her wishes were passed over. Mary, anxious only to return to England and to her brother, had taken the easiest line and surrendered to the 'Louvensteiners.'

De Witt had gained his real end—the control of the Prince's education. The commission, under De Witt's leadership, at once decided to withdraw the Prince from Leiden, that he might live 'in the house and under the eye of their 'Noble Great Mightinesses themselves.' 'The house' meant the old Stadtholder's Quarter of the Binnenhof which adjoined the apartments of the States of Holland. De Witt was also very anxious to secure the dismissal of William's uncle and governor, Count Zuylestein, whom he considered dangerously royalist in opinion; but Zuylestein's influence was strong at the English Court, and for the present the commission let the matter alone.

Before arrangements could be made for withdrawing William from Leiden, Mary's sudden death threw everything into confusion again. Her will provided for William's destiny not as De Witt had hoped, but as any Stuart might be expected to provide for the welfare of another. The States of Holland were not so much as mentioned. On the contrary, she entrusted her son entirely to Charles's care, imploring him to be his 'protector and tutor.'[1] De Witt found this 'somewhat strange.' 'The Princess Royal,' he wrote, 'makes her will, and not only does not make her son her 'universal heir, but leaves him hardly worth a penny[2]: she

[1] There is extant a letter from William to Charles, dated Leiden, February 2, 1661, in which he urges Charles, as 'mon Tuteur,' 'de me faire obtenir 'la designation de toutes les charges que mes predecesseurs ont eues en ces 'Provinces,' by pleading his cause with the Dutch Ambassadors. The letter is obviously the composition of older people. It is printed in Appendix VI of Japikse's *Verwikkelingen tusschen de Republiek en Engeland*, 1660-65.

[2] Mary indeed only left William a few jewels.

'recommends him to the care of the King, but makes not the 'least mention of the States, not even of those of Holland, 'to whom she had delivered her son as to *superior guardians* 'during her lifetime.'[1]

This claim of 'superior guardianship' De Witt now proceeded to urge. He distrusted and disliked the current English dogmas about royalty, and his great aim was to keep William free, in his formative years, from contact with English courtiers. 'We are determined,' he said, 'to win the consent 'of His Majesty and of the Princess Dowager to the transference 'of His Highness's personal education, absolutely and without 'any reserve, into the hands of Their Noble Great Mighti-'nesses.' In this way the Prince's affairs would be controlled 'not by many and various but by one single and powerful 'direction'; and the Prince will be assured 'of the love and 'affection of the government and people and consequently of 'the enjoyment of the duties which his predecessors possessed 'in this State.'[2]

De Witt, in this short time of universal peace, hoped that William's upbringing might be of a sort to assure future harmony between Holland and England. On May 6, 1661, he wrote his mind on the subject to his uncle Zuidpolsbroek, Burgomaster of Amsterdam. If the Prince was to be 'a 'bond whereby all difference between the King and this State 'may be abolished,' he must live 'in continual intercourse with '"regenten" bound to this province with love and affection.' Otherwise, 'being imbued with strange maxims and English 'pride,' he will be nothing but 'a source of misunderstanding 'between the two nations,' which would be 'in the highest 'degree harmful, nay ruinous' for the State.[3] He did not appear to consider that William's character was not an easy one to mould, nor of the stuff that makes a good republican, even with the most careful education.

De Witt could not persuade either Charles or Amalia to recognise the States' right as 'superior guardians.' Rather

[1] *Brieven van Johan De Witt*, ii. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*

than risk a quarrel with England, De Witt determined to leave the matter alone for the present.[1] In September 1661 the Resolutions of the previous year were annulled, while Charles and Amalia settled between them that William's education should remain under Amalia's direction. He stayed at Leiden for another year, and then returned to the Hague, whither he brought also his dogs and falcons. 'The Graven-'hage,' the original hunting-lodge of the long-dead mediaeval Counts of Holland, once more resounded to the cries of huntsmen and the barking of dogs as the Prince rode forth to scour the country for hares and herons.[2]

Amalia's one wish was that William should be eventually the possessor of his ancestor's dignities. She was far too cautious, however, to offend the States by any haughty demands or dangerous intrigues. Instead, she tried to reach a compromise by offering to hand over to them the entire education of the Prince, in return for a promise or designation of the Stadtholderate and Captain-Generalship at some future date. Charles was obviously not prepared to take any steps in his nephew's favour, which increased the Dowager's anxiety to meet the views of the States of Holland.

De Witt would have done wisely to comply with her wishes. Had Holland 'adopted' William now, with a good will and without theoretical fears for the future, designating him at least as the future Captain-General of the Union, the hope of a true reconciliation between the Governors and people of Holland might have become a reality.[3] But De Witt felt no desire to promise anything about the Prince's future, and rather than do so he preferred for the present to have nothing to do with his education. As long as England

[1] In April 1661. Zuidpolsbroek advised him not to risk offending 'such 'great personages' as the King, Amalia and the Elector of Brandenburg (*Brieven aan De Witt*, ii. 35).

[2] Ising, *Het Hof te 's Gravenhage*, p. 6 ff.

[3] 'The same misunderstanding of public feeling was still standing in his way. He now missed a fine opportunity of imbuing the Prince with Holland's principles, and a chance, however small, of reconciling in the future the Prince's with the States' partisans, in the interests of all.' (Japikse, *Johan De Witt*, pp. 191–2.)

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did not concern itself about him, and France maintained 'M. de Witt et sa cabale,'[1] it was better to leave the matter alone. Thus neither his mother, by surrendering to De Witt's party, nor Amalia, by refusing until it was too late to recognise their claims of superiority, succeeded in gaining for the boy any recognition or any substantial promises.

If the States ignored him, the people did not. The welcome given to him by the people and militia of Utrecht in June 1661, told him that he was loved. Still in mourning for his mother, he entered the city riding on a black horse, greeted by the burgher companies in arms, with drums beating. For five days they feasted and made great joy of him; when he rode away the troop of cavalry lined up on each side of the road as he passed down between them, while the trumpets rang out the defying notes of the 'Wilhelmus' as a farewell to the beloved Orange child. Who can tell what strange emotions that air, and its words of tragedy and hope, awoke in the mind of Triglandt's pupil?[2]

On May 6, 1664, William had his first skirmish with a French Ambassador. He drove along the Voorhout[3] in his coach to watch the erection of the tents for the Kermes—the annual fair whose proceeds were a perquisite of the House of Orange. Opposite the Kloosterkerk he was met by the French Ambassador in his coach. The Ambassador called on the Prince to make way in the name of his master the King of France. William refused to do any such thing. Crowds, hostile to D'Estrades, collected. William's governor, Zuylestein, who was with him, contrived to send a message to Princess Amalia, with a request that she would at once summon her grandson to her presence. When the message came, William got out of his coach and went inside one of

[1] Instructions to the French Ambassador D'Estrades, 1662, Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives*, Series II, v. p. 250.
[2] De Witt Huberts, *Jeugdjaren*, pp. 71–74.
[3] The broad avenue in the centre of the Hague.

the Kermes booths, leaving his carriage to turn round empty, while D'Estrades drove by.[1]

There was something more than bravado in this demonstration on William's part. Of late he had had cause to be ill-satisfied with the King of France. Far away in Provence lay the little mediaeval town of Orange, from which William took his famous name. In 1660, his mother, with her usual rashness, appealed to Louis XIV to help her against the Governor, Count Dohna, who had refused to recognise her claim as sole guardian of the Prince, and hence to accept her nominations to official posts in the Principality. Louis, as might have been expected, was only too ready to comply. In February, 1660, he declared himself William's 'tuteur' for the principality; on March 20 he sent troops to summon the town, and Dohna, discouraged and surly, gave it over without resistance. Louis thereupon declared his intention of governing it in the Prince's name until his majority, unless a Roman Catholic governor were appointed. He ordered the walls and defensive works to be destroyed. The garrison collected the taxes in William's name 'while the military commander takes them 'all.' Soon it became clear that persecution of the Protestant section of the inhabitants was to be the method by which Louis meant to obtain his demand. Protestant officials were placed under arrest; a child of eight was savagely beaten in the public street by an executioner, 'because he was 'said to have insulted the Catholic religion. . . But he 'uttered no complaint, and bore himself as a brave martry should.'

Constantijn Huygens, Amalia's secretary, was despatched to Paris in 1660 to do what he could to recover Orange. Five years passed during which the behaviour of the French garrison grew steadily worse, and the little city was practically treated to a dragonnade. At length Amalia promised to appoint a Catholic Governor 'sous main.' With this promise Louis was at last content, and on March 25, 1665, the French

[1] *Briefwisseling van C. Huygens*, part vi. p. 61: Amalia to Huygens.

troops marched out of the town. By the terms of the exchange, the walls were not to be rebuilt.[1]

Whether William knew of the cruelties and injuries inflicted on his Protestant subjects by the bullying power of France, is not certain, though highly probable. Certainly he knew of the destruction of the walls and the humiliating presence of French troops.[2] And the knowledge of his own helplessness was perhaps the hardest thing of all to endure. His defiance of D'Estrades in the Voorhout may well have been symbolic of a deep, young anger against the despoiler. In any case, the incident was prophetic.

In 1665 the Republic was again plunged into a naval war with England, while the Bishop of Münster took the opportunity of attacking the eastern frontier. The situation of 1672 was foreshadowed, as it were, in little. It was imperative that the States-General should appoint someone as Field Marshal or Captain-General of the army. The State of Overijssel demanded in the States-General that William should at least be designated, and sent as head of an embassy to England to negotiate peace.

De Witt was determined that William should not have the post, and his chief reason seems to have been fear of offending France, who was giving desultory support to the Republic at sea, and had lent her some troops in virtue of a treaty of alliance of 1662. William, he still feared, was in the hands of those who would try to make his advancement profitable for the 'enemies of the State' *i.e.* the English. Yet, under proper safeguards, he was willing to do something to satisfy the national demand for William's elevation. If Turenne could be borrowed from France—Turenne at once Protestant, a great general and a favourite of Louis XIV—and

[1] See introduction to Parts IV and V of the Huygens *Briefwisseling*: and letters *passim* from residents in Orange.

[2] De Thou suggested in 1660 that William should be given some compensation for Orange, in order to attach him to France in view of his probable future greatness, and 'pour adoucir un peu cette amertume de la démolition. '. . . Dans son esprit se descouvre desja quelques semences de fierté.' Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives*, Series II, v. 205.

set over the armies of the State as Field-Marshal, William might be placed under him as Cavalry-General, and thus 'he 'would at once be separated from the English and would live 'in good intelligence with our allies.' A somewhat strange proposal, this importation of a Field-Marshal from abroad; yet it was quite in accordance with seventeenth century custom.[1] If it had been realised, William would have been able to do that for which he afterwards longed in vain—to serve a campaign under one of the great marshals of France before he was obliged to serve against them.

Louis, however, could not spare Turenne, and on February 25, 1666, Prince John Maurice of Nassau, ex-governor of Brazil and builder of the 'Mauritshuis' at the Hague, was appointed Field-Marshal, with two Frenchmen, the Prince de Tarente and Pain-et-Vin under him as Cavalry-General and Quartermaster. It would be unsafe to appoint William under his own cousin. De Witt had by his personal effort won over the Orange-tinted towns of Haarlem and Leiden to withdraw their demands for the elevation of the Prince. Zeeland, however, where Orange sentiment was strong even among 'regenten,' flung herself into the breach with indignation. In a conference with the States of Holland she demanded the post of Cavalry-General for William, and a seat on the Council of State, on the ground that 'he is already very lively 'in intelligence and begins to draw his own conclusions.' Dordrecht, the most bitterly anti-Orange of all the towns, did not hesitate to say that, if he were given a seat in the Council of State, he would reveal everything to his English and Anglo-phil friends. In vain Zeeland urged that it was cowardly to refuse his advancement for fear of offending France, and rejected with indignation the suggestion that he would betray State secrets. To De Witt's wrath, the Zeelanders carried their demands to the States-General. After 'so 'solemn a refusal by the States of Holland,' he regarded this proceeding as nothing less than 'an attempt to stir up the

[1] Nearly all the officers of the States army were foreigners.

'other provinces against Holland, which in these circum-'stances (*i.e.* in time of war) can hardly be regarded as less 'than seditious.' [1]

The war with England, combined with this great effort on the part of the Orange party in the country, led directly to William's adoption by the States of Holland as a 'Child of State,' and to the dismissal of those members of his household who were thought to be working in the interests of England. As early as March 4, 1666, De Witt determined 'immediately to detach him from all correspondence, in-'clination, and affection with and towards the present enemies 'of the State, and from the education and daily conversation 'of English and Anglo-phil people, both men and women, 'for so long as that is not done, during the war, any advance-'ment would give jealousy to our allies and would conflict 'with the security of the land.'

De Witt first won Princess Amalia's approval to the scheme. She was pleased to be rid of Zuylestein, and on April 2 sent a memorial to the States of Holland requesting them to take the Prince entirely into their charge. Her attempts of 1662 and 1663 were at last being crowned with success, though the initiative came this time from the States. By a series of Resolutions passed in quick succession, the States undertook (in De Witt's words), 'the care of the 'person and household of the Prince of Orange, removing 'from him all those who are spoiling him with a bad example, 'and above all those who are in any correspondence with the 'King of England or his ministers.' [2] Henceforward no one was to have anything to do with him save 'good patriots of 'known affection for the Republic.' [3] Zuylestein was dismissed with a pension: an Englishman, Matthew Bromley, was

[1] *Brieven van Johan De Witt*, iii. p. 173: De Witt to van Beverningk.

[2] There seems no reliable evidence that Zuylestein was in any guilty correspondence with England. The conspiracy of Buat against De Witt's government, which took place this year, did not implicate him, as might have been expected. Buat was in league with two Rotterdam 'regenten,' Kievit and van der Horst, who fled the country, leaving Buat to die alone on the scaffold.

[3] *Brieven van Johan De Witt*, iii. pp. 171–172.

sent back to his own country. Heenvliet, the Princess Royal's old servant, and Boreel, son of the Ambassador in England, were likewise sent away. In their stead, the Education Commission of 1660 was re-instated, with De Witt at its head, and the Heer van Gent was appointed governor. He was a well-known partisan of the French alliance. For De Witt aimed not merely at cutting William free of England, but at attaching him to France, whose favour he was somewhat blindly courting during the war with England. Van Gent was admonished 'not to alienate him from the King 'of France, but on the contrary to impress upon him what 'consideration he should have for such notable allies.' In vain Leiden and Haarlem pressed to be represented on the Commission. De Witt would have none but the sternest 'patriots' of Dordrecht and Amsterdam. Except Van Gent, however, no 'regenten' were placed in William's household.

William's agony when he heard of these resolutions passed all expectation. It was not the political change that hurt him: it was the parting from those he loved. On April 12 he took the only step which, in the present state of the political atmosphere, he felt might be of some avail. He went in person to D'Estrades, and there pleaded 'la larme a l'oeil,' with the suave Ambassador, to do what he could with De Witt on behalf of Zuylestein. 'He would send his English 'wife away to one of his estates,' explained William, 'and never 'see her again till we are at peace with England. I will go 'bail for him that he will never act against the will of the States 'of Holland. As for me, I will trust myself entirely to M. de 'Witt and regard him as my own father. They do me wrong 'if they think I have any dealings with the King of England. 'I am a Child of State, so how could I have any attachments 'save with the States and their friends and allies?'

D'Estrades shrugged his shoulders, promised to do his best, but held out no hopes. William then appealed to Van Gent, to withdraw from so ungrateful a post. 'I promise 'you,' he said, in a kingly manner, 'that neither you nor

'your family shall suffer in your estate if you do this.' It was of no avail. He fell ill with grief for some days, and when he emerged to face his tutors, he was calm and composed. With dignity he asked the Commission to take charge of his financial affairs: to pay his numerous debts 'to butchers, bakers and other merchants,' and to put a stop 'to the sale of his estates *à vile prix*.' To De Witt he submitted himself without reserve 'as to a father,' and when the Dowager's jealousy at their frequent private conferences was aroused, he roundly told her 'that since she herself had thought 'good to place him in the hands of the States of Holland, he 'considered them as those from whom he must expect his 'good fortune, and that he would live with them and with 'M. de Witt with every sort of respect, deference and friend-'ship, and that if she had a mother's true feelings towards him, 'she would rejoice to hear such sentiments from him.' [1]

His conduct at this crisis was the more admirable because, in adopting him Child of State, Holland did nothing for his advancement. All question of military command or a seat in the Council of State was relegated to the distant future, with a vague promise that his education should fit him 'for 'the service of the States.' Had De Witt now conferred upon him some considerable military post or given him that seat in the Council of State which so many had demanded for him, he would have risen honourably above party narrowness, and yet the 'vrijheid' would not have been endangered. So graceful an act would have made the rest of the business less humiliating. But Zeeland's precipitate action had undoubtedly hardened De Witt against making even minor concessions.

Eighteen months later, the bit was tightened yet again. Once more it was a question of the headship of the army. Louis XIV had overrun the Spanish Netherlands with troops

[1] D'Estrades, *Lettres, etc.*, iii. pp. 186–203, ed. 1709. See also Baroness van Zuylen van Nyevelt, *Court Life in the Dutch Republic*.

in the summer of 1667, at the time when the Dutch were emerging victoriously from the English war at sea. A committee of the States of Holland proposed to appoint John Maurice, and another able officer, Paulus Wirtz, joint Field-Marshals of the army of the State. On July 8, De Witt wrote that 'even in our own body,' (*i.e.* in the States of Holland), agreement could not be reached, owing to insistent demands for the Prince. Unwillingly De Witt allowed himself to be won over to the famous policy of compromise embodied in the 'Perpetual Edict.' He was not, as his contemporaries for the most part supposed, the author of the Edict. Its chief apologists were Gillis Valckenier, Burgomaster of Amsterdam, and Fagel of Haarlem. Valckenier, a man of unbridled ambitions who was bitterly jealous of De Witt's position in the Republic, had lately replaced De Witt's uncle Zuidpolsbroek as one of the burgomasters of Amsterdam, with the result that opinion there was less pliant to De Witt and, consequently, slightly more favourable to the Prince. Fagel of Haarlem represented the ever-growing middle party who realised better than De Witt the necessity of determining more definitely the Prince's future. He lived to become William's own servant, as Grand Pensionary of Holland from 1672 to 1688, when the 'vrijheid' had fallen for ever.

These two men wished the Prince to fill the position of Captain and Admiral-General of the Republic when he reached the age of twenty-one, and they also wished him to take his place immediately as a member of the Council of State, like his father before him. But they were as determined as De Witt that he should never be Stadtholder. That office, with its extensive domestic and civil powers encroached too much upon the domain which the Dutch oligarchy reserved for themselves.

The Perpetual Edict, the outcome of all these aims, was passed by the States of Holland on August 5, 1667. Without mentioning the Prince by name, it proclaimed the Stadtholderate of the province of Holland abolished 'for ever.'

Henceforward no Captain or Admiral-General might be Stadtholder of one or more provinces, and on his appointment to either of these posts he must promise never to make any attempt to become Stadtholder, and to refuse all such offers if they were made.

Its purpose, as De Witt read it, is best told in his own words. The question of the Prince's appointment was such 'an insuperable obstacle' to any agreement about the army, that it was found necessary 'from now onwards' to bring his person into greater importance, provided the 'vrijheid' was safeguarded. The Edict secured that he who was now placed in the Council of State and who 'in time' would become Captain-General, 'would never be given such power that he 'could range himself against the State and encroach upon the '"vrijheid".'

Every member of every town government in Holland was obliged to swear to maintain the Edict and never to attempt to change it. In Amsterdam two councillors, Bontemantel and Hooft, refused at first to swear, and did so at last on January 3, 1668, 'with grumblings,' saying, 'we 'shall only have to unswear it when the time comes.'[1] They realised the hazard of binding the future by paper resolutions.

To have unity among the members of Holland was De Witt's great aim, and this, when all had sworn, he did at length obtain. Then began his long struggle to get the principles of the Edict accepted by the other provinces. His plan was to induce every province to declare the Stadtholder's office incompatible with that of the Captain-General, then to give William a seat in the Council of State and, when he was twenty-two years old, to confer on him the Captain-Generalship.[2] This plan he called the 'Project of Harmony.' But Zeeland insisted that William's advancement must take place first, and until it was done refused to abolish the Stadtholderate. De Witt found himself embarked on a controversy,

[1] Kroon, *Jan De Witt contra Orange*, quoting from Bontemantel's MS. notes.
[2] Japikse, *Johan De Witt*, p. 176.

which was to last for nearly three years, during which nothing whatever was done for the Prince. The burden of forcing the policy of one provincial oligarchy on the governments of every other State in the Union fell on him, and hence it was he, and not its true originators, who became identified with the Edict and bore the whole odium of its authorship. The other provinces considered it as yet another attempt on the part of Holland to assert a political dictatorship, and the common people saw in it a direct insult to their Prince.

Whatever the success of his 'Project' with the other provinces, De Witt felt secure of two things. The Stadtholderate of Holland was gone for ever, and with it the nightmare of a repetition of the events of 1650. Secondly, William was for the present De Witt's pupil. Little is known of what passed between them during the long hours in which they were almost daily closeted together. De Witt said, rather vaguely, that he was putting William 'au fait des 'affaires.' Later he told Temple that he was 'growing to 'have a particular affection' for the Prince. Whatever William may have thought of De Witt's carefully balanced plans for his 'advancement,' he behaved with exemplary docility. He did not flinch even when a deputation, headed by De Witt, informed him that he must never hope to be Stadtholder.[1] De Witt added, with deliberate bluntness, that this step had been taken to render impossible such actions as 'the enter-'prise of your father, which,' he said, 'we all detest.' When he came of age, he might hope to command the army of the State. William thanked them for their care of his interests. But from August 10–17, 1666, he kept his room. The newspapers said he had been taken suddenly ill, but the disease was not specified. The Perpetual Edict may well have been the cause. If Triglandt's teaching and the hope and love of the people meant anything to him, the Edict must have come as a well-nigh unendurable blow. He had learnt to look upon himself as destined for Government and command;

[1] Lefèvre-Pontalis, *Jean De Witt*, i. p. 515.

for that he had waited and prayed, submitted to bitter separations, given himself freely into the hands of men who were his father's deadly enemies. What other purpose, indeed, could life hold for such as he? Now he saw the greatest of the 'dignities of his forefathers' taken from him, and the others held out as distant hopes. A strange 'advancement' it must have seemed to him. And in that delicately-strung being the body bowed only too readily to anguish of mind or spirit. But some indestructible quality now, as always afterwards, asserted itself, saving him not merely from physical wreckage but from rash and resentful attempts to secure his own advancement by illegal means. In September he sought the wilds of Gelderland and recuperated mind and body with a fortnight's hunting. When he returned, he took up his duties as Child of State with his usual quiet self-control—dissimulation the French Ambassador called it—and from now until his final triumph refrained with scrupulous care from any action that could render him justly suspect to the States.

For nearly three years, until he was at last admitted into the Council of State in July 1670, his life, except for one incident, was outwardly uneventful. His break-away, in the absence of his governor Van Gent, to Middelburg in September 1668, was his one act of insubordination. Since 1660 he had been First-Noble Elect of Zeeland, in virtue of a resolution passed by the States of Zeeland in that year. It was a dignity borne by all his predecessors and entitled him to a seat in the Assembly of the States of Zeeland, in person or by deputy. When he was eighteen he was entitled to claim his seat. The most Orange of the provinces could not wait until his birthday, and on September 17 he entered Middelburg, 'not as First Noble nor as Governor, but as Sovereign 'of the Province.' Lodged triumphantly in the old Abbey buildings, he listened all night to the frantic cheering of the crowds, the firing of ordnance, the pealing of the bells of

Lange Jan far up in the dark sky.[1] Next day he took his seat, making a formal and perfectly colourless speech,[2] in the first person plural, in which he declared his intention of 'following 'the same measures of Our August Ancestors . . . who have 'at all times acted for liberty and religion.' He appointed his cousin Nassau-Odijk, the husband of a rich Zeeland lady, to be his deputy: a most unfortunate choice, as his corrupt government turned even the Orangist Regenten against the Prince.[3]

The States of Holland were angry, less at the assumption of a perfectly legal title, than at the more than royal welcome that had been accorded him. They had no power to do anything and, after some grumbling, thought it best to accept the 'fait accompli.' William returned to his studies in the Hague, where for the first time he met the English Ambassador, Sir William Temple. In him William found a friend who did not embarrass him with intrigues, but gave him that respectful consideration which thawed his reserve and won his confidence.

Temple was at this time working out in detail the provisions of the Triple Alliance, which had been concluded in the previous January.[4] The English Government was cultivating the good will of De Witt, and Temple was instructed 'to inspire into the Prince the desire and value of supporting 'himself wholly upon the affections and goodwill of the States, 'and not upon any private factions.'[5] De Witt was perfectly willing to allow Temple to see the Prince in private, knowing that the Englishman was to be trusted. Van Gent was more suspicious. 'Very diligent in all our encounters,' Temple wrote of his jealous watchfulness.

Temple's description of the Prince of Orange[6] is the most vivid of any that have come to us from the days of his youth.

[1] Letter from Huygens to Princess Amalia, written from Middelburg, 11 P.M., September 18, 1668. Published in English in *Original Letters of William III* (1704).

[2] See *ibid.* for a translation.

[3] Huygens, *Briefwisseling*, part vi. *Letters* 6680, 6695, 6696.

[4] See Chap. II, below.

[5] Courtenay's *Life of Temple*, i. p. 282.

[6] *Ibid.* p. 285, quoting from a letter to Arlington, February 3, 1669.

It shows him during a period of severe trial to his dignity and patience, when the future was an almost impenetrable blank, and when he was in no sort of consideration with the courts of either France or England.

'I find him,' he says, 'in earnest a most extreme hopeful Prince, and to speak more plainly, something much better than I expected, and of the better sort: that is, not lying in that kind of wit which is neither of use to oneself nor to anybody else, but in good plain sense, with show of application if he had business that deserved it, and that with extreme good agreeable humour and dispositions: and thus far of his way without any vice. Besides, being sleepy always by 10 o'clock at night, and loving hunting as much as he hates swearing, and preferring Cock ale before any sort of wine. I thought it not impertinent at once to give you his picture, which the little lines are to make rather than the great ones. . . . His person, I think you know, is very good, and has much of the princess in it,[1] and never any body raved so much after England, as well the language as all else that belonged to it.'

The last sentence shows how much of William's thought was in reality turned upon his mother's country. Temple had told De Witt how men there already looked upon him as their king that was to be. The only person whose right might possibly take precedence of his was a girl of six years old, the Duke of York's daughter, William's own future wife. It was a question whether William, a man, and the son of the Princess Royal, might not have the better claim. William's somewhat astonishing interest in England probably had its origin in this absorbing prospect, rather than in any desire that his uncle would help him to recover his lost Dutch dignities. That, he decided from the first, must be his own affair. But a short two days' voyage away there lay another country, mighty at sea, Protestant, and just now enthusiastically Royalist. The future held one possibility at least which no Perpetual Edict could destroy.

[1] *I.e.* of his mother, the Princess Royal.

JOHANNES DE WITT
Dordracenus Ord Hon Advocatus
Sigillorum custos &c. e vivis
ptus XX. Aug. 1672. ætat. 47.

JOHN DE WITT.

CHAPTER II

De Witt and The Triple Alliance, 1667–8

The naval war with England, which broke out in 1664, owing to colonial quarrels and rivalries, though it began unfavourably for Holland, left her in a prouder position with regard to her great sea neighbour than she had ever been before. This result was due as much to the energy with which De Witt himself watched over the equipment and efficiency of the Dutch fleet, as to the genius with which De Ruyter led it in action. De Witt was a true Hollander in that his country's naval and commercial strength were as dear to him as her political independence. After the English victory at Lowestoft in 1665, nothing would satisfy him but that he must go to sea himself, with two other members of the States, aboard De Ruyter's flagship. He thought that his presence at the council board would lead to more systematic thinking and consideration of strategical questions than was usual among the sailors 'who,' he wrote, 'do not seem born 'to great thoughtfulness.' This strange experiment—which may be compared to sending the Prime Minister to sea nowadays—though many people at the time thought it mad, had none of the bad results that might have been expected. De Witt and De Ruyter were excellent friends, and after he was ashore again De Witt wrote courteously to the great admiral, thanking him for 'the pleasure of your daily conversation and 'the enjoyment of the communication of your knowledge and 'experience in many matters.'

Perhaps the real secret of his success among the sailors is to be found in the remark of his fellow-deputy, Boreel: 'He does not know what fear is.' His resolution to turn assistant-admiral was based upon no spirit of interference or civilian jealousy, but simply, as he told his friends, 'on the 'absolute necessity of upholding our dear fatherland, at least 'of contributing as much thereto as is in my power.' He felt that, as virtual head of the Dutch State, he could not fulfil his obligations to her without for a time sharing in person the life of the fleet wherein lay her safety.

He was not present on the expedition which, in June 1667, invaded the Thames and fired the English fleet as it lay in Chatham harbour, but the enterprise was planned and watched by him with the utmost care. Its success proved that England could not even keep her own coasts safe from invasion and she was obliged, a month after the Chatham expedition, to sign a treaty of peace at Breda. De Witt, indeed, used Chatham as a lever to force the English to make peace. 'I hope our fleet will keep house in the Medway for some 'time, as it is a great sanction for peace,' he wrote to his brother Cornelis, who represented the States-General on board De Ruyter's flagship. At the same time Sir William Temple wrote to the Earl of Arlington, Charles II's Secretary of State, from Breda: 'De Witt is resolved that their fleet shall not 'give over action till the very ratifications of the Treaty are 'exchanged.'[1]

Peace was made, on the basis of 'uti possidetis,' each power retaining the conquests she had made during the war. De Witt did not realise the vast colonial future England was gaining by her acquisition of the Dutch colonies in North America—the future New Jersey, Delaware and New York. They linked New England to Virginia, giving us an unbroken coast-line. Holland obtained Surinam (Dutch Guiana) and Poleroon in the East Indies, and was content. Nor did England realise her good fortune. In London no bonfires

[1] Temple to Arlington, *Works*, i. p. 299, ed. 1770.

were lighted in the streets, for the memory of Chatham still rankled, and the terms of peace were thought inglorious.

The achievements of De Ruyter in the Medway and the Thames sent a wave of patriotic enthusiasm through the Dutch people, and there was a cessation, for a time, of Orange movements. 'Men's minds at home are better disposed than 'ever before for the maintenance of the "vrijheid,"' wrote De Witt. A burgher of the Hague wrote: 'It is a peace to 'our great glory. The people here are extraordinarily over-'joyed, and give great honour to the Ruwaard (Cornelis De 'Witt) and the Grand Pensionary, who will now be so powerful 'that no one will dare speak against them.' [1]

But though the peace had confirmed Holland's claim to be England's rival or equal as a naval and colonial power, a war cloud still hung over Europe which threatened the land frontiers of the Republic. While De Ruyter had been battering the British navy in the Kentish estuaries, Louis XIV had fallen upon the south-west frontiers of the Spanish Netherlands and conducted a swift and successful campaign of conquest. His claim was upon Flanders and Brabant, which he said were his in right of his Spanish wife, in spite of her deliberate renunciation of all such claims on her marriage. 'If the 'claims of kings,' says Voltaire 'could be judged by the law 'of nations before a disinterested tribunal, the affair would 'have been somewhat doubtful.' [2]

Charleroi, Ath, Tournai, Douai, Lille fell before him during the summer months of 1667, nor had the lethargic and disorganised Spanish government any force or diplomacy with which to oppose his progress. The Republic had been in alliance with France since 1662, and France had been nominally at war with England since 1665. De Witt, who prized the friendship of France at a distance, grew alarmed at the prospect of so martial and ambitious a power absorbing the entire barrier State of the Spanish Netherlands. 'I am

[1] Van der Goes, *Briefwisseling*, i. p. 324.
[2] *Siècle de Louis XIV*.

'in the utmost apprehension,' he wrote to van Beverningk, the Ambassador at Breda, 'conjointly with you, at the present 'designs of France, and pray you to establish some sort of 'confidence with D'Estrades and Courtin on the subject.'

He was quick to offer the mediation of the States in obtaining for Louis XIV such concessions from Spain as were founded on 'justice and reason.'

On May 23 he wrote to D'Estrades, the French plenipotentiary at Breda that he would use his influence with the States to obtain Franche Comté for the King.[1] With a touch of republican pride he warned D'Estrades to hasten his advances, for 'it is very easy to give offence to the members 'of an aristocratic State composed of so many heads.'

The prolonged negotiations which filled the summer and autumn of 1667 were unfruitful, and their tortuous course is characteristic of an age in which duelling was the favourite sport of gentlemen. Louis and his Secretary of State, Lionne, were adepts in the art of setting their opponent at a disadvantage while appearing to act with plausible moderation and condescension.

On July 4, Louis opened the duel by revealing the terms on which he would be content to accept peace. De Witt was less shocked by the number of towns and fortresses he demanded[2] than by Louis's proposal to reserve his pretensions to the whole Spanish Monarchy in the event of the death of the invalid King of Spain, Carlos II, without children. The War of the Spanish Succession might at any moment break out. The boy who had begun to reign in Madrid over the vast, bankrupt Spanish Empire was already the pivot on which the hopes and fears of European kings and statesmen turned. He survived, contrary to all expectation, for thirty years more, the prey of every kind of morbid suffering and superstition.

In reply to Louis's demands, De Witt proposed that, on

[1] Combes, *Correspondance de Jean De Witt, Mélanges Historiques*, i. p. 292.

[2] These were: Luxembourg, Cambrai, Aire, St. Omer, Bergues, Charleroi, Tournai and Douai.

the death of Carlos, Holland and France should unite to form 'cantons' of the chief Netherland towns, creating a chain of independent republics between France and Holland. He also demanded an immediate armistice for three months during which he hoped a settlement might be reached. Louis would hear of no such armistice and immediately dropped the negotiation. For the next two months he pushed on with his conquests, during which period all De Witt's confidence in him was shattered.

On September 27, Louis wrote again and his offer was cunning. He accepted all De Witt's modifications of the original terms, even the proposal to canton the Netherlands, offered an armistice for six months and no longer (they would in any case be winter months during which no operations of war could take place); and if Spain refused these terms, pressed Holland to force Spain to cede all the places conquered by France during the year's campaign.

De Witt hesitated, as well he might, at serving as a sanction to Louis's 'right of conquest.' Louis showed no inclination to withdraw his arms from Flanders, nor to desist from further conquests next summer. On October 20, De Witt told D'Estrades that there must be an armistice until peace was concluded and that whatever peace was made must be guaranteed by the princes of the Empire.[1]

Louis, on receiving this news, immediately adopted the attitude of the children in the market-place. He had piped to De Witt's own tune, yet the stiff-necked Dutchman would not dance. De Witt, however, could not be moved. 'Nothing,' he wrote to Meerman, the special Ambassador sent to England in October 1667 ostensibly to consummate the peace of Breda, 'can be expected from this affair of the Spanish 'Netherlands unless France is deprived of the power (which 'lately we have perceived in her) of carrying off with her the 'rest of the Spanish Netherlands.' To this end the co-operation of the English Court must be sought, to obtain an armistice

[1] Mignet, *Négotiations Relatives à la Succession d'Espagne*, ii.

while peace was made and to guarantee the defence of the Netherlands 'in case of the failure of a reasonable agreement.'

This was indeed the main purpose of the Embassy to London of 1667. De Witt did not either now or ever afterwards contemplate a break with France or even an alliance with England hostile to France. The safety of his 'dear 'Fatherland' was as usual his first and only aim, and he wanted England's support in forcing Spain to yield, and France to accept and abide by, certain definite concessions.

The autumn of 1667 was at once a period of anxiety and enjoyment to Lord Arlington, Charles II's Secretary of State. Raised to power on the fall of Clarendon, Arlington is the first and by no means the least important of the 'new men' of the Restoration. His political senses were keen and shrewd: he was cautious and circumspect where his rival in the cabinet, the Duke of Buckingham, was rash and high-flying. His chief aim at this time was 'to bee quiet the next 'year at least,' in foreign affairs, 'without which our domestique 'will bee much disordered.'[1] He was indeed terrified of embarking on any policy which would offend the susceptibilities of the Parliament, ill-content and sore as it was with the disgraces of the last war with Holland. He knew that what the Commons had done to Clarendon they could do equally well to him and that the Duke of Buckingham was only too ready to hound them on if an opportunity offered. At the same time he had a considerable spice of that sort of reckless love of intrigue for its own sake which characterised so many English statesmen of his generation, and overreached itself in the incomprehensible and fascinating man of the Revolution, Robert Spencer, Earl of Sunderland. We may give Arlington credit at this time for a genuine desire for peace (the French Ambassador observed that he was 'Espagnol par inclination, Hollandais d'alliance'); and a dislike of seconding or promoting Louis XIV's designs on

[1] Arlington to Ormonde: Barbour, *Earl of Arlington*, p. 134 n.

Flanders. But his methods were recklessly crooked. He made proposals of alliance with France against Holland which he never meant to keep, and instead of entering directly into negotiations with the Dutch Ambassadors on the subject of the peace, he preferred to work privately by unofficial ways.

He was quick to grasp the significance of the fact that all parties were bidding for England's alliance or support during this autumn. The Dutch special embassy has already been mentioned. Louis XIV had sent over his Huguenot diplomat, Ruvigny, to persuade the king to unite with him to obtain his 'droits' in the Spanish Netherlands.[1] The Baron Lisola, the Ambassador of the Emperor and sworn enemy of France, wanted a definite alliance between England and Spain to force France back to her boundaries of the Peace of the Pyrenees.[2] Arlington listened to all and committed himself to none. A letter to Sandwich which he wrote on November 28 is the measure at once of his caution and his indifference. 'The 'Dutch Ambassadors pressed us very hard to make peace. '. . . We are now inquiring of the Ministers they have here 'what sentiments the Kings their masters have towards 'the peace. Monsieur de Ruvigny hath told us his, and to-'morrow we go to see the Spanish Ambassador and the Baron 'Lisola to know theirs.'[3]

The French Ambassador's chief hopes lay not in Arlington, but in Charles himself.

In conversation after conversation Charles expressed his own private inclination to join Louis, for whom his admiration was as profound as it ever was for anyone. But he too was afraid of the House of Commons, and he told Ruvigny that he must 'manage his Parliament.' Ruvigny himself spoke with bated breath of the power of this mysterious body. 'Il est 'à craindre,' he wrote, 'que ce grand corps n'entraîne tout le 'monde dans ses sentiments.' Buckingham, to spite Arlington, had his own private faction in the House of Commons.

[1] Ruvigny's instructions, Mignet, vol. ii. p. 505 *sqq.*
[2] Signed in 1659.
[3] *Letters of the Earl of Arlington*, 1701.

Ruvigny received nocturnal visits from muffled M.P.'s of Buckingham's war party, who told him France had only to offer high enough terms and England would readily fight for her.[1]

It was a duel between Ruvigny and Arlington for the King's support, and Arlington won. He made the Frenchman think that England's neutrality or support in the Flanders war could be bought by a joint offensive and defensive alliance against Holland, in which each crown was to support the other in the event of being attacked by Holland. A paper to this effect was drawn up by Arlington in Ruvigny's presence on December 2, in which it was said that 'one must agree upon 'the time, the means and the measures which could be taken to 'arrive at the execution of this proposition.' It made no difference to Arlington that no such occasion was likely to arise, nor that Louis could not at present afford to give up the Dutch Alliance. He probably knew that his terms would be refused by Louis in such a way that he could persuade Charles to give up all idea of a French Alliance. He had played his cards well. Louis, in a long memoir to Ruvigny dated January 4, 1668 (new style) refused to contemplate any such league against Holland and instead suggested that Charles should attack some place in the Spanish West Indies while Louis would perhaps condescend to besiege a port or two in the Spanish Netherlands, with English troops and ships, to be handed over to Charles at the peace. Only if Holland broke with France England might assist France to ruin her commerce.

Obviously such a treaty could be of no conceivable advantage to England. Arlington had no difficulty in persuading Charles and the whole Committee of Foreign Affairs to reject it.[2] The way was now clear for clinching his own project. On November 25, the very day on which he had interviewed Ruvigny about a possible league with France,

[1] Mignet, vol. ii.

[2] Barbour, *Earl of Arlington*, p. 129. Mignet, vol. ii., for text of Louis's proposals.

Arlington had secretly drawn up instructions to Sir William Temple, who was at present at the Court of Brussels, requesting him to return to England by way of the Hague where he was to seek a private audience with De Witt. 'You shall 'plainly tell M. de Witt,' he says, 'the scope of our sending 'you to him is to be informed whether the States will really 'and effectively enter into a league offensive and defensive 'with us for the protection of the Spanish Netherlands . . . 'even against France itself.' [1]

For two weeks this momentous document lay on Arlington's table. When at last he felt sure enough of the King, he despatched it, and Temple received it on December $\frac{15}{25}$, 1667. There can be no doubt that these instructions represented Arlington's real intentions, and that he was in earnest in desiring a close union with Holland. His reputation with Parliament depended on a popular stroke of foreign policy. Such an alliance would be infinitely more creditable to the Government than a barren league with France at the dictation of Louis and Lionne. Yet we must not read into Arlington's policy any far-sighted anxiety about the balance of power in Europe. He was striking a balance of advantage for himself and his master, but when, eighteen months later, he found he could no longer keep Charles to the Dutch alliance, he followed him without much demur into the Treaty of Dover, which sacrificed Holland to French ambition as effectively as the alliance of January 1668 put a temporary brake on these very ambitions.

The instructions of November 25 were acted on joyfully by Temple, who longed to distinguish himself, and before the month of January was out, England and Holland were bound by him into a close bond, which, when Sweden acceded to it in May, became the famous Triple Alliance.

Temple was the best possible negotiator in a task of such delicacy and skill. He was forty years old, courteous and direct in conversation, fired with a real admiration for De Witt

[1] Courtenay's *Life of Temple*, ii. pp. 381–382.

and a desire for a good understanding between his own country and that of the high-minded Pensionary. He had visited the Hague incognito in the previous October, when De Witt had spoken to him anxiously about the war in Flanders and with much regret about the misunderstandings which had given rise to the late war with England.

Other conversations heard during his visit persuaded him that an alliance between England and Holland was desirable. 'The Dutch are sensible,' he wrote to his brother, 'that if the French shall carry Flanders they must fall to be a 'maritime province of France on the best terms they can. . . . 'If we both understood or trusted one another it is likely we 'should be both of a mind in this matter.' [1]

Temple hastened to England in obedience to Arlington's summons after what he considered a highly satisfactory interview with De Witt. We have his own account of the conversation in a letter to Sir Orlando Bridgman, dated January 27, 1668. De Witt, he said, welcomed the idea of a joint mediation, but was opposed to war except in the last resort. He thought the terms offered by France in September ought to be the basis of the peace, and the mediation should be offered 'to induce France to make good their own offer, 'and Spain to accept it.' He refused to consider making an offensive alliance, saying it was a principle with the States never to form any in time of peace.

De Witt himself was somewhat astonished, if not perturbed, by this sudden offer from England.[2] Throughout the negotiations of January which culminated in the signing of the Alliance he shewed again and again his deep distrust of the English Government. Temple finally talked him over and convinced him, but the conversations between them, reported in Temple's letters, show that this was only accomplished with difficulty. His distrust was not ill-grounded. In the first place, why had the English Government not

[1] *Memoirs of Sir W. Temple*, i. p. 310, ed. 1770.

[2] See Japikse, *Johan De Witt*, p. 261 *sqq.*, and De Witt's letter to Meerman, January 8, 1668, *Brieven*, iv. p. 609, ed. 1723.

negotiated directly with the Dutch Ambassadors who were there for the purpose? When Temple returned to the Hague in January with powers to treat, De Witt told him roundly that he knew not how long the present good resolutions of the English Government might last. 'Since the 'time of Queen Elizabeth,' he said, 'there has been a 'perpetual fluctuation in the conduct of England, with whom 'we have never been able to concert measures for two years 'together'—an accusation which Temple could not deny.[1]

De Witt was, moreover, determined not to enter into any engagements which would entail or imply a break with France. He was most anxious for a satisfactory settlement of the Flanders question and could by no means afford to reject the opportunity offered by Temple, but to give up the French Alliance would be a change in the trend of Dutch foreign policy which he was not prepared to initiate. It was only in the belief that the Alliance as finally concluded need not be interpreted as contrary to the existing engagements with France, that he consented to sign it at all.

In comparing De Witt's letter of January 6 to Johan Meerman, describing his preliminary conversation—or rather two conversations—with Temple before January 1 with Temple's own account of the matter, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the English Ambassador took too optimistic a view. De Witt refused to consider either an offensive league with England 'contra quoscunque,' or an offensive league against France in particular. The latter, he considered, could not be undertaken without the 'highest injustice,' unless the King of France gave 'righteous and palpable 'cause.' With regard to a joint 'league for the defence of the 'Spanish Netherlands' he referred Temple to the Resolution in the States of Holland of December 10, 1667, in which a conference with the ministers of other European courts present in the Hague was recommended, for the purpose of 'push-'ing the affairs of the two fighting kings to an agreement,

[1] *Temple*, i. p. 333, ed. 1770.

'obtaining definite promises from France and her consent to 'an immediate armistice.' He indicated that he would rather act in concert with all the allies of the Republic.

Temple tried then to persuade De Witt that if his master was disappointed of the Dutch alliance he would join France and annex Zeeland, an idea which De Witt put aside almost with scorn.[1]

In a second conversation of December 31, however, De Witt allowed himself to be persuaded that England would assist Spain. Even so he made no offers. The States, said he to Meerman, with what must be regarded as ironic scepticism, will, of course, offer no opposition to England or anyone who is kind enough to relieve them 'of an all too formidable 'neighbour,' and await with impatience the result of Temple's report in England.

When Temple returned to the Hague early in January, 1668, his instructions were modified so as to meet most of De Witt's scruples. There was no more talk of an offensive alliance against all and sundry or France in particular. England and Holland were to enter into a defensive league and were to 'oblige France to stop all further progress of the 'war upon the first proposal of mediation.' In other words, no attempt was to be made to deprive France of what she had already won by conquest, only to check her, as it were, in mid-career and say 'here shall thy proud waves be stayed.' The question was what sanctions were to be applied. Arlington added: 'In case of a difficulty of Spain to accept it, it should 'be left wholly to the mediators to persuade or to force them 'to it.' But Charles added in the margin: 'For the undecency 'of the word "force" I would willingly have it left out.'[2] The terms to be offered were to be those formerly proposed by the King of France to the States in September (*i.e.* his own

[1] Temple's justification for making such a proposal was the following clause in his instructions: 'Let him (De Witt) bethink himself what an accession it would be to the French King's strength if we should lend him from hence a considerable body of foot the next campaign: and in that case what would become of Flanders, and even Holland itself?'

[2] Courtenay's *Life of Temple*, ii., Appendix B. Instructions of January 1, 1668.

conquests, or a barrier of Flemish towns, with the Duchy of Luxembourg or the province of Franche Comté). Arlington urged Temple to lose no time, 'for fear of any disturbance 'from France.' Probably also he feared Charles's inclination for the project would cool and his desire for a French alliance re-assert itself.

The drafting and signature of the Anglo-Dutch Alliance by Temple and the Dutch Commissioners began on January 18, (new style), and was completed by January 23. At De Witt's request Sweden was persuaded to become a joint mediator and guarantor of the peace, and hence the treaty became known as the Triple Alliance. The first two parts of the treaty only were made public. Of these, one declared the close defensive alliance between England and Holland which was to be the basis of the peace. The second provided for an immediate peace between France and Spain, and a cessation of hostilities on the part of France, Spain being obliged to cede to France either Luxembourg or Franche Comté, with Cambrai, Douai, Aire, St. Omer, and some other towns, practically all, in fact, which France had conquered. England and Holland promised 'to take effectual care' that Spain should accept these terms, and 'to induce and persuade' Louis in future not 'to disturb the quiet of the Low Countries.' The armistice was to last till the end of May, and even beyond it, if the Spaniards had not by that time given their consent. In any case 'it shall not be left to the discretion of the most 'Christian King (*i.e.* Louis XIV) to exercise any acts of hostility 'in the said countries.' To put a stop to the progress of the French was indeed De Witt's first wish. In this part of the treaty, however, nothing was said of the methods to be used to constrain Louis to consent to peace, in case he should refuse when the Spaniards had accepted.

The secret articles contained the sting without which neither De Witt nor Temple would have considered the treaty ultimately of any avail. By the third of these articles, 'if beyond all expectation' the most Christian King refuse either

to sign the peace after Spain had done so or 'should endeavour 'by any subterfuges to hinder or elude its conclusion,' then England and the States 'shall be bound and obliged to join 'themselves to the King of Spain and with all their united 'force and power make war upon France.' If necessary they were to force him back to the original boundaries of the Peace of the Pyrenees of 1659.

The wording of this article is probably more the work of Temple than of De Witt. He had always been anxious to take the strongest possible measures against France, and had told De Witt on January 18 'that the States' part would 'be next after Flanders was gone, and that they had no other 'choice but either continuing their friendship with France 'till they should see both Flanders and themselves swallowed 'up by such a neighbour, or else change their whole measures 'and enter into the strictest league with his Majesty for the 'preservation of both and let France take it as they pleased.' He clinched this argument by telling De Witt (as Charles had given him leave) of the projected treaty of alliance against Holland which Ruvigny and Arlington had drafted on December 2. Temple did not know that Arlington had originally proposed this treaty: he used it as a useful instrument towards fostering in De Witt a deeper distrust of France. De Witt, when he heard of it, said, 'nothing would serve so 'far to justify them in case of a breach growing necessary 'between them and France.'

Probably this had been Arlington's real intention when he drew up the scheme with Ruvigny on December 2. Temple's first set of instructions were already lying on his table in the Foreign Secretary's office, and the proposed alliance against Holland, which he knew at the time would be impossible, was a weapon he could use to good effect in time of need.

In order to secure the speedy ratification of the Treaty and to prevent any possible manœuvres on the part of the French Ambassador to stultify it, Temple persuaded De Witt to

submit it at once to the States-General before asking the assent of the various provincial States. De Witt acquiesced in the anomaly, and by January 27 the Anglo-Dutch Alliance was an accomplished fact.

It only remained to break the news to the French Ambassador. Temple was prepared to brave a good deal of anger on the part of France; De Witt sincerely hoped all would pass off peacefully. Together De Witt and Temple waited on D'Estrades and communicated to him all but the secret articles of the Treaty. D'Estrades was at first cold, then indignant. He took exception to the new alliances formed by the States 'without communication with him during the 'whole treaty.' He upheld his master's right to go on with the war if Spain proved obstinate. Finally he made a grim prophecy which Temple may have remembered bitterly in after years. 'My master will not flinch,' he said, 'whatever 'alliances you make: this will lead to a war of forty years.' [1]

De Witt consoled himself at the time by saying to Temple that 'it was the least we could expect at first of a Frenchman.' But D'Estrades had not overestimated the anger which his royal master felt at the Treaty. De Witt was confident that 'a little politeness and complaisance at the utmost' would serve to correct any false impression the French Court might conceive of the intentions of the States—'a proof,' says Dr. Japikse, 'that De Witt had no conception of what offended 'majesty meant in Louis XIV.' [2] Louis' anger indeed knew no bounds. We know from a memoir which he wrote in 1674 in what light Louis regarded the Triple Alliance.[3] The Dutch, he says, alone in Europe dared oppose his 'legitimate 'pretensions' on the Spanish Netherlands, 'and even dared 'use threats in case I should refuse their mediation.' The secret articles soon came to his knowledge and gave some faint excuse for the implacability with which he proceeded to plan the destruction of the United Provinces.

[1] Temple, *Works*, i. p. 323–4, ed. 1770.
[2] Japikse, *De Witt*, p. 265.
[3] Rousset, *Vie de Louvois*, i. Appendix.

England's part in the transaction did not trouble him in the least. He knew what alliances were worth in the English Court. He was perfectly aware that Charles was at heart his friend, and that he would in course of time either throw over Arlington or induce him to adopt a French policy. It was the Republic that constituted the real obstacle to his ambitions; the Republic could not be bought and must, therefore, be visited with condign punishment.

The Triple Alliance was hailed with joy by the people in Holland. 'It is hardly imaginable,' wrote Temple, who was himself much elated, 'the joy and wonder conceived 'here upon the conclusion of this treaty.' The Dutch people indeed were relieved at the prompt measures taken to stay the ambition of France. 'We are moving in earnest against 'France,' was the opinion of a worthy gentleman of the Hague, Adriaen van der Goes: 'she had pictured monarchy 'to herself already and at Paris it was common talk that the 'King wanted to see Amsterdam.' [1]

In England, the opinion was that the French power was a menace both to Holland and England, 'so that the alliance is 'certainly good for us at this time, while we are in no condition 'to resist the French.' [2] Arlington had indeed been largely influenced in the whole matter by the hope that the Alliance would mollify Parliament. 'All we can promise ourselves of 'their temper,' he wrote to Ormonde on January 28, 'is 'founded in the late Treatys we have made with Holland.' Here he was disappointed. The Commons were not inclined to vote money for any league, defensive or offensive, and would not proceed to a supply until they had grumbled to their liking about the miscarriages of the late war.[3] Arlington himself was anxious to abide by the Alliance as long as he could hold the King to it.

Of the men who had had most part in forming the treaty, Temple showed the most unfeigned delight. He regarded it,

[1] Van der Goes, *Briefwisseling*, i. p. 417. [2] Pepys.
[3] Barbour, *Earl of Arlington*, p. 137, and *Parliamentary History*, 1668.

not without reason, as largely his own work; it had been concluded in less than a week, before any public Minister in England, except the King and Arlington, were aware that it was on foot. He had made friends with De Witt, whom he thoroughly liked and trusted,[1] and he was convinced that the policy embodied in the Alliance represented the mind of the King and his Secretary and the basis of English policy for the future.

The Triple Alliance achieved its immediate object. Louis was obliged to make peace with Spain, and the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was signed on May 2, 1668. By it France became possessed of a formidable line of towns in Flanders, stretching from Bergues on the coast to Charleroi at the junction of the Sambre and Meuse, and including Courtray, Lille, Douai and Tournay. Franche Comté, which Condé had invaded, was restored to Spain. Though the lands around these frontier towns were not technically handed over with them, Southern Flanders had virtually become a French province. To a man of the temper of Louis XIV such a peace was but an incentive to further conquests. But his progress in the Spanish Netherlands must be interrupted for a time in order to satisfy his anger against the Dutch. The annihilation of their Republic became with him a passion, whose intensity De Witt unfortunately did not realise until too late.

De Witt, as we have seen, had striven to make the new alliances and the mediation acceptable to France, nor did he regard the English Alliance as constituting a serious change in the foreign relations of the Republic. It was in his mind a measure of expediency rendered necessary by the presence of the French in Flanders. When peace was made the old relations with France would be restored and all would go on as before. To his dismay he found that D'Estrades would admit of no such understanding unless the defensive league with England were broken up. Only then did De Witt

[1] 'I found him as plain, direct and square in the course of business as any man could be.' Temple to Arlington, January 24, 1668.

realise that the friendship of England and Sweden must now be retained at all costs, for France was looking coldly, almost menacingly, on the Republic.[1]

The Triple Alliance was one of the great turning-points in seventeenth century history. It had been brought about by the ambitions of Louis XIV. His resentment at it, and consequent destruction of it, revealed his hand still more plainly, and at last set Europe, under a new leader, on the defensive against him.

William of Orange, on whom this leadership was to devolve, had been in no way concerned with the formation of the new league. He was as yet without political power or influence. Arlington was indeed anxious that his name should in no way be connected with the treaty, in case of suspicions which might be aroused in the Dutch Government.[2] Temple did not see the Prince during his negotiations in the Hague, and only courtesies passed between him and De Witt on the subject of the Prince's affairs. But the 'Child of State' whose presence in Holland was a source of uneasiness to a Government which feared his future influence, was to forge out of the material of the Triple Alliance the weapons which ultimately defeated Louis XIV. It is for this reason, and not only because of its immediate consequences that the Triple Alliance deserves to be remembered. It brought into prominence for the first time the alliance between England and Holland which was the corner-stone and condition of all William's activities against Louis. The league of 1668 differed indeed widely from William's later diplomatic arrangements in its extent and interpretation. William always sought to draw in as many European powers as possible into his leagues: in particular he courted the alliance of the House of Habsburg

[1] Japikse, *Johan De Witt*, p. 270.

[2] 'The consideration of his interest at the present time shall not at all interfere with or disturb the great interest betwixt the nations which must always be superior to that particular one.' Temple's instructions of November 25, Courtenay, *Life of Temple*, II. p. 381–2.

both in diplomacy and in the field. De Witt, on the other hand, resisted the attempt of the Imperial Ambassador in London, Lisola, in May 1668, to draw Holland into a defensive alliance with Spain and the Empire. He resisted it because he knew that such an inclusion would mean 'a 'complete alienation and breaking-off of all correspondence 'and friendship between France and this State.' Besides, he still felt himself the descendant of those Dutchmen who, a century before, had thrown off the Habsburg yoke. 'To 'the House of Austria,' he said, 'we are still rebels and 'heretics.' [1]

When William took up the direction of affairs in 1672, France was already the Republic's declared enemy, so these scruples no longer had any relevancy. But the alliance with England, won in 1668, only to be speedily and disastrously lost, had to be recovered, and for that he worked and waited with restless patience until the catastrophe of 1688 brought it at last within his grasp, and he took it for his own.

[1] De Witt to Meerman, May 4, 1668. *Brieven* iv. p. 781, ed. 1723.

CHAPTER III

The Treaty of Dover

'We truckle to France in all things, to the prejudice of our alliance and honour.' Andrew Marvell, Aug. 9, 1671, *Works*, i.

'It is certain that the King of England has the best will in the 'world to make as close a union with His Majesty (Louis XIV) 'as can be made between two kings, but I fear he will be turned 'from it by my Lord Arlington.'[1] Such is the constant refrain of M. Ruvigny's despatches to the French Court in the months of May and June 1668. On Arlington's influence over Charles II depended the maintenance of the Triple Alliance. Charles was balancing in the middle of the political see-saw, weighed down at one end by Arlington and Temple's treaty, but irresistibly attracted to the other by the prospect of a lucrative and untroublesome union with the most powerful king in Christendom.

In August, Ruvigny, who was a Huguenot, was replaced by Colbert de Croissy, a Roman Catholic, the brother of the great Minister of finance and commerce. In his instructions to that envoy,[2] Louis revealed the full extent of his determination to break the Triple Alliance, and draw England into war with Holland. His anger against the Dutch, born of his frustrated ambition, made him cast aside all his engagements to them as unscrupulously as if they had never been made. Not only is the King of England free, he argued, since the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, from all engagements with the Dutch, but the King of France considers himself no longer bound by his treaty with the Dutch of 1662

[1] Mignet, *Negotiations*, iii. p. 24.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 24–29.

'by which I bound myself to defend them against every 'aggressor,' and is desirous of entering into an offensive and defensive alliance with Charles, as he feels 'capable of being drawn to attack them himself conjointly with England, when their majesties shall deem it suitable for the good of their kingdoms to make this enterprise.' His argument was that the Dutch had been bound by the treaty of 1662 to join their arms to his when he made war on Spain in 1667 and by failing to do so had themselves broken that treaty. This was a fantastic notion, as the Dutch were under no obligation whatever to go to war at the bidding of France, nor had Louis asked them to do so when he invaded Flanders.

The one obstacle to the conclusion of this alliance was—as Louis well realised—Arlington. He therefore informed Colbert that he must stick at no expense to win this 'pièce 'si délicate à faire jouer.' But, as the Minister is so deeply engaged with Holland, the most refined forms of bribery only must be employed, and at the same time the offer must be so enormous 'as to stifle utterly the inclinations he has for 'Spain and Holland.' A hundred thousand crowns' worth of plate on the day of the ratification of the proposed treaty was the price at which this most cynical and polite of monarchs proposed to buy the English Foreign Secretary.[1]

Colbert de Croissy did not at first find his task easy. Arlington, he found, had been corrupting Charles's mind with a jealousy of the French power at sea, both naval and commercial, which had been lately raised to a greater height than it had ever before attained, by the efforts of the ambassador's able brother. On September 2, 1668, Charles wrote to his sister Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans, that the English dislike of French commercial rivalry was a real obstacle to alliance. He was acute enough to see that no alliance with France, however profitable to himself, would survive unless the English Parliament and merchants were satisfied that the country's commercial interests were safe-guarded.

[1] Barbour, *The Earl of Arlington*, p. 145.

As if in answer to this complaint, the influence of Minister Colbert in the counsels of France began henceforward to wane before the malevolent and narrow genius of Louvois. Louvois fostered Louis's passion for revenge and conquest; for these the dawning prosperity of a commercial and naval France must be content to die.

Abroad, Arlington strove to draw the bonds closer between England and her allies while there was yet time. His friends and nominees filled the English Embassies in most of the European Courts. Temple at the Hague, Godolphin at Madrid, Montagu in Paris all considered themselves his confidants. At home in the Committee of Foreign Affairs Trevor and Bridgman balanced the French party headed by Buckingham and the Duke of York. Ashley, the hammer of the Dutch, and Clifford, the Roman Catholic, had not yet appeared upon the scene.[1]

Temple was engaged in the difficult work of guaranteeing the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. The fifth article of the Triple Alliance stipulated that 'not only the King of Great Britain 'and the confederated States, but likewise the Emperor and 'all the neighbouring princes who shall think themselves 'concerned that . . . the Low Countries be restored to the 'enjoyment of their former tranquility,' should agree to maintain the peace, if necessary by force of arms, against any aggressive action on the part of France or Spain. Such a guarantee, De Witt told Van Beuningen, the Republic's ambassador in Paris at the time of the Triple Alliance, was necessary because 'experience has taught us that the solemn 'Treaty of the Pyrenees did not prevent the late invasion of 'the Spanish Netherlands.' At the same time he was anxious to maintain the friendship of France, 'because, the customary 'insolence of the English nation may come to the surface again 'in a day or two, and then we shall be left unprovided with 'friends.'[2]

[1] See Barbour, *Earl of Arlington*, p. 149.
[2] De Witt to Van Beuningen, May 31, 1668. *Brieven*, iii. p. 410.

The guaranteeing of the Peace involved the payment of subsidies to Sweden for the use of her troops in case of need, and Temple spent the remainder of his time in Holland vainly trying to persuade the Spanish envoy that his country must pay the required sums.[1] The 'sick man of Europe' was unwilling to lift a finger for his own salvation, and Temple at last told the Spanish Ambassador, Molina, with some asperity that the three allies must hold Spain responsible for 'any misfortune that may arrive.' His active mind was at the same time evolving other plans for the strengthening of the Peace: the inclusion of the Emperor into the Triple Alliance; the need of alliances with the German princes to protect Holland from attacks from Münster on her eastern frontier. Temple felt, even more strongly than De Witt, that the French power 'hangs still like a cloud over all our 'neighbours' heads, leaving everyone in doubt when and where 'it will fall.'[2]

From Arlington he received assurances that in England there was 'no tergiversation or hanging towards France'—a somewhat desperate denial, for Arlington already knew that, with the advent of Colbert de Croissy in England, and the increasing pressure put on Charles to embark on new adventures, the difficulties for the Alliance party were growing formidable.

English statesmen of the seventeenth century were seldom prepared to sacrifice office when they could no longer guide public affairs according to their will. If the King could not be driven he must be followed.[3] But no single statesman ever achieved so complete a *volte-face* as did Arlington in the year 1669. He had spent much care and patience in initiating and consummating a new foreign policy for England—the only intelligible policy she had had, with the exception of Cromwell's, since Elizabeth defied Spain. Now he not

[1] Japikse, *De Witt*, p. 299; Temple's *Works*, vol. iii. *passim*. ed. 1770.
[2] Temple to Bridgman, October 2, 1668, *Works*, i. p. 30, ed. 1770.
[3] Compare Halifax's work for Charles in the last years of his reign and Sunderland's for James II.

only took part in framing the completely opposite policy, but was privy to the monstrous design of forcibly converting England to Roman Catholicism by the aid of French money and troops. It is impossible to conceive of Clarendon or even Strafford acquiescing in such a course.

Arlington was informed, or suspected, at the end of December, 1668, that a big change was in the wind. The Duke of York had already secretly declared himself a Roman Catholic and was urging his brother to do so. Charles was for the moment convinced that, if the French King would really help him, it would be the best way of realising his favourite dream—a kingship independent of Parliament. The Dissenters, he thought, would be willing to support him in putting down the Church of England. On January 25, 1669, he announced to James, Arlington and the Roman Catholic Clifford, in the strictest secrecy, the changed state of his religious convictions and the hopes he had of a speedy alliance with his dear brother of France.[1] Arlington made no attempt to protest. Perhaps he too dreamed of a happy state where Ministers need no longer fear Parliament, 'that 'two-handed engine at the door,' and was willing to see all that had given him credit as a minister sacrificed to that ephemeral aim. Doubtless he felt honoured by his master's confidence in so delicate a matter. He saw that Charles was by no means ready to let him go, but rather determined to take his cleverest minister along with him into these new paths. His idea of allegiance was to cling to office as long as office gave him influence over Charles's mind, and he still hoped that in framing the treaty with Louis he could wring advantages from the French.

On June 6, 1669, Charles wrote to Henrietta his famous letter about the fortification of the chief English ports in preparation for the 'Grand Design.' 'There is all the reason 'in the worlde to joyne profitt with honour, where it may be 'done honestly,' he went on in his enthusiasm, 'and the King

[1] Barbour, *Earl of Arlington*, p. 155.

'will find me as forward to do Holland a good turne as he can 'desire, for that country has used us both very scurvily and I 'am sure we shall never be satisfied till we have had our re-'venge.'[1] For both Charles and Arlington knew that Louis would only pay for Charles's 'conversion' if Charles would lend the British fleet for the destruction of the Dutch. He went on to assure Henrietta that she might trust Arlington absolutely. The secretary himself wrote to her on June 20 a letter which shows clearly to what a pass his strange and muddled loyalties had brought him. He would serve the King till death, he said, and 'would not, for all the wealth in 'the world act any other part than that of a good English-'man.'[2] He meant that no one in future should have any reason to call him 'Dutchman.'

Until November 1669, Charles insisted on absolute secrecy in the negotiations. He would not even trust Colbert de Croissy. He urged his sister to stop the boasting talk of the French ministers in Paris, for fear of rousing the suspicions of the English Parliament.[3]

Meanwhile, in the Hague, Temple's heart was already sinking under the intolerable suspicion that all was not well in England. He did not indeed yet fear Arlington, but he was too shrewd not to read a sinister purpose in the mission of the Roman Catholic, Colbert de Croissy, who had replaced the Huguenot Ruvigny in August.[4] He urged De Witt to 'root 'this alliance in the very hearts of the people and current 'genius of the nation, and not rely wholly upon the present 'inclinations or judgment of his Majesty, or the disposition 'of his ministers.' He meant that if the alliance were really popular, and combined with trading advantages to both nations, the difficulty of breaking it would be so much the greater.[5]

[1] Cartwright, *Madame*, p. 288. [2] *Ibid.*
[3] Charles to Henrietta, June 7, 1669. Cartwright, *Madame*, p. 291.
[4] 'Great overtures would now be made us from France to the prejudice of 'this alliance.' Temple to Arlington, September 7, 1668; Courtenay, i. p. 289.
[5] Courtenay, i. pp. 290–292.

As the winter drew on, Temple noticed with regret a tendency even in Arlington to magnify small differences about points of trade.[1] He was deeply disappointed that the English ministers refused to support his schemes for the extension and strengthening of the Triple Alliance. He was too confident that his sole business in Holland was 'bold and 'forward paces against France for the defence of Spain.'[2] If the Government contemplated 'other measures' than the alliance, he warned them he would have no part in them. He had succeeded better than he had hoped in drawing De Witt into more open opposition to France than he was at first inclined to, and thought it a thousand pities if 'we should 'begin to make our paces upon the same way with more 'reserve.'[3] Nothing, he thought, was more essential to the peace of Europe than 'to enter into action against France 'upon the pursuit of their greatness.'

In April, 1669, the first rumour of changed counsels in England reached Temple and De Witt. The Swedish Ambassador had been unofficially told by Turenne in Paris that any further thoughts of guarantees or leagues with England or Spain were useless, as England 'was already 'changed in the course of all those counsels they had taken 'with Holland and Sweden.' Temple made as light of the matter as he could, and De Witt, though he too was disappointed at the backwardness of England in the matter of the alliance, refused as yet to be seriously concerned.[4] The matter of the subsidies to Sweden and guarantee to Spain dragged wearily on, hampered by artificial quarrels manufactured by Arlington about the English inhabitants in Dutch Guiana and the salute of the flag in the Channel.

[1] 'You are not at all mistaken in your observation and complaint of a sharp 'humour amongst us . . . which cannot be corrected but by giving us fair and 'equal dealings in trade.' Arlington to Temple.

[2] To Trevor, October 26, 1668. *Letters*, published 1699 by D. Jones.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Temple to Arlington, April 24, 1669. On September 2, Temple wrote that the Dutch were 'placing all their hopes of taking any constant measures 'with us upon the steadiness of His Majesty's late counsels and the dispositions 'of our present ministers.'

On December 18, 1669, the first draft of what was afterwards called the Treaty of Dover was handed to Colbert de Croissy by Arlington. During the autumn these two had gradually taken over the negotiation from the King and Henrietta. It differed little in principle from its final and more famous edition. In consideration of his change of faith, Charles would receive during the next six months the sum of £200,000 from Louis; in addition to which Louis was to assist Charles to 'convert' the English nation with money and troops, 'according to need' 'in case his subjects 'do not acquiesce in the said declaration' (*i.e.* of Charles's change of faith) 'and rebel (which is not thought likely).' The date of his conversion was to be left entirely to Charles's discretion. When that was accomplished, and not before, the two kings were to make war jointly on the States-General and neither was to make peace without the consent of the other. Louis was to pay Charles £800,000 a year for the use of the British Navy. Nor was William of Orange forgotten. 'Inasmuch,' ran this clause, 'as the dissolution of the govern-'ment of the States-General is the principal end we propose 'in this war,' His Highness will receive compensation and suitable advantages. It was expected that he would aid them by his influence in 'the conquest of the country.'[1]

The whole financial and military burden, both of the war and of the 'grand design' fell, in this provisional treaty, on France. Charles promised to 'transport' 6,000 infantry to France at his own expense, but it was jointly understood that they were to be maintained at the expense of France. From the spoils of conquered Holland, he claimed the islands of Walcheren and Cadsand at the mouth of the Scheldt.

Arlington was still trying to play his own game. He was determined to prevent Charles from beginning the foreign war until after the *coup d'état* in England had been successfully accomplished. De Croissy did not trust his

[1] Text of Treaty in Mignet, iii. pp. 117–120.

enthusiasm for the war in any case.[1] Arlington may well have disliked and feared the prospect of a long foreign war waged almost entirely on behalf of France. He could never hope to wield the same influence in the counsels of Europe, or even in the English Committee of Foreign Affairs, when the whole work on which rested his fame and reputation was destroyed, and when France bestrode Belgium, Holland and perhaps Germany 'like a Colossus.' On the other hand, it was just possible that if Charles's 'conscience' were satisfied first, the war might be indefinitely put off. Such, at any rate, seems to have been his slender hope.

The first treaty was drawn up according to Arlington's wishes in this respect. It was to change this arrangement, and to secure that, whatever became of Charles's declaration, Holland must first be destroyed, that Louis sent Madame to Dover in May 1670.[2] By Clause IX of the Treaty there drawn up it was agreed that war should be declared entirely at Louis's discretion at any time he thought proper after Charles's declaration of Roman Catholicism. But in private Henrietta was able to arrange that even if Charles found it impossible after all to continue with the 'grand design,' he would yet go to war whenever Louis was ready. Charles was easily persuadable; perhaps he had been reflecting on the dangers of precipitation in religious matters where the English people were concerned. Arlington yielded to the blandishments of Henrietta but refused the proffered bribe, thus saving what was left of his credit. On June 1 the Treaty of Dover was signed by Arlington and three English Roman Catholics, Arundel, Clifford, and Bellings, and by Colbert de Croissy on behalf of France. James, Duke of York, disliked the change of balance in the Treaty which Madame brought about. He alone of the King's councillors

[1] 'I do not find him much heated against the Dutch, and I must say, sire, that I still doubt whether the proposal to attack them conjointly with your majesty, after the declaration has succeeded, is quite sincere, at least on the part of this minister.' Colbert de Croissy to Louis, December 5, 1669; Mignet, iii. p. 117.

[2] For the text of the Dover Treaty, see Mignet, iii. pp. 189–197.

felt any real enthusiasm for Charles's 'grand design' of 'converting' England, and thought with some reason that this was being sacrificed to a less religious aim. He did not accompany his brother to Dover.

The complete success of the Dover negotiations depended on keeping them secret from Temple and the Dutch. This task was made all the easier by the too implicit reliance of De Witt on the Triple Alliance. His confidence in that ill-fated treaty led him to adopt diplomatic methods that were strangely careless, while at the same time he was over-anxiously manipulating home affairs—in particular those of the Prince.[1] From September 1668 until August 1670 there was no Dutch minister in Paris. The States were unrepresented from September 1669 to January 1671 in Madrid, while the all-important post in London was filled by the incompetent Boreel, who accompanied the Court to Dover in 1670, whence he informed De Witt that 'the French party is not cheerful 'and even somewhat subdued' and that 'everything still stands 'fast.'[2]

De Witt's only anxiety was to secure England's co-operation in admitting the Emperor into the Alliance—a project to which Temple had now won him over. With this object Van Beuningen, ex-burgomaster of Amsterdam, was sent on a special mission to London in the summer of 1670. He arrived while the Court was still at Dover, and remained in England until December. He discovered nothing, though as time went on he could not help noticing that English enthusiasm for the alliance and its extension seemed to be cooling.

Meanwhile Louis, as a preliminary move, in August 1670 invaded the Duchy of Lorraine and expelled the reigning Duke. Even this gross outrage on a peaceful State did not rouse De Witt from his security as it ought to have done. During August 1670 he wrote to Van Beuningen that 'he could not

[1] See below, Chap. IV.

[2] Boreel to De Witt, June 3 and 7, 1670; *Brieven aan Johan De Witt*, ii. pp. 469–470.

'entertain the idea of such notorious perfidy as that the King of 'France should perpetrate so unfounded a rupture.'[1] Rumours had reached him that the King of England was in league with France.[2] He brushed them aside as 'not merely incredible 'but practically impossible.' England, he argued, could never be so mad as to assist France to attack and conquer the Spanish Netherlands.[3] On August 31, when the French troops were already on the march towards Lorraine, he thought they were merely going into garrison and declared 'the news from France 'of an offensive and defensive league with England is in my 'opinion as far from truth as the East is from the West.'[4] When the 'threatened storm' did fall on Lorraine, he sought 'to 'labour with common counsel and common force' with England and the German princes to prevent the great dangers to the Spanish Netherlands which he feared as yet more than an attack on the Republic. Finding England backward and unwilling, he refused to act without her and no diplomatic action was taken.

Nevertheless by September he confessed himself 'not 'entirely satisfied that England would act with the requisite 'promptitude and vigour in case of an attack on the Spanish 'Netherlands or on this State.'

An event had indeed happened which De Witt could not treat lightly. On September 1, 1670, Temple received orders to leave the Hague and return to England. Arlington told him that his absence would be only temporary, that he must leave his house ready, and his wife in it against his return; but the reasons given for the sudden recall were so vague[5] that both De Witt and Temple were startled. Uneasily they took leave of one another, neither daring fully to reveal to the other the sudden weight of fear on his heart. De Witt

[1] *I.e.* a rupture with Spain or the Republic. *Brieven van Johan De Witt*, iv. p. 82.

[2] The first warnings came from Rumpf, the Dutch agent in Paris. See *Brieven*, iv. 60 note 4.

[3] De Witt to van Beuningen, August 29 and September 2, 1670. *Brieven*, iv. p. 82–3.

[4] De Witt to Jan Deutz, August 31. *Brieven*, iv. p. 59.

[5] . . . 'For this new affair of Lorraine and for many considerations.' Arlington to Temple, September 1, 1670. *Letters*, 1701.

referred anxiously to the 'coldness in English counsels' since Madame's journey to Dover. Temple repudiated with horror the suspicion De Witt had hinted at and added 'If ever such 'a thing should happen I will never have any part in it.' He returned to London, and at once saw that all was changed. Arlington kept him waiting an hour and a half on his first visit and then would not discuss business; the King met him in the Mall, 'asked me half a dozen questions about my 'journey and about the Prince of Orange and so walked on.' Bridgman and Trevor were still firm for the alliance, but Temple saw that they were 'barely in the skirts of business.' Clifford raged openly against the Dutch.[1] Dorothy Temple wrote from the Hague that his recall was looked on as permanent and as a sign of storms ahead, and her cautious husband felt that weather was coming 'that he would have no mind to 'be abroad in.' Eight months later his mission came officially to an end. His wife was fetched home in a royal yacht, and when Admiral Van Gent omitted to salute it as it passed the Dutch fleet, the English Court purposely made the incident an occasion for further bickering with the Dutch Government. 'And so,' said Temple in September 1671, 'an 'adventure has ended in smoke which had for almost three 'years . . . restored and preserved the general peace and left 'His Majesty the arbitrage of all affairs . . . for the common 'safety and peace of Christendom.'[2]

The Triple Alliance was riven, and the good ship Seven Provinces was labouring out of the mist at last to find herself alone in terrible seas.

The only Dutch diplomat who was acute enough to realise the full gravity of the situation in the autumn of 1670 was Pieter de Groot, who was sent to Paris as ambassador in August, ostensibly in order to obtain a repeal of the duties and prohibitions lately placed on Dutch imports. His letters to De Witt contain repeated warnings of England's perfidy

[1] Temple to his father, November 22, 1670: *Works*, ii. p. 167.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 174.

and France's evil intention. The visit of the Duke of Buckingham to Paris in the autumn made him uneasy, and on February 27, 1671, he told De Witt that he had authoritative information of a secret treaty between France and England for the destruction of the Republic. The treaty he had news of was the 'sham' treaty negotiated by Buckingham with Arlington's connivance, in order to keep Buckingham quiet.[1] It differed from the Treaty of Dover only in the omission of the 'grand 'design.' De Groot felt convinced that, whatever the details of the arrangement, France intended war on the Republic, but that she would never dare to attack it 'with all her great 'captains' unless she was assured of England's support at sea. In January 1671 he told De Witt that 'we must entrust 'our security to our own strength only.' De Witt was unwillingly led to the same view during the next two months. He saw that in England there was 'only weakness and perverse 'intentions in the Court' (he would not even yet admit treachery) 'although the Parliament and the whole nation is 'for the Triple Alliance.' He regarded England's refusal to admit the Emperor into the Alliance as an attempt 'if not to 'change sides, at least to make the treaties of alliance with this 'State in case of attack, of no effect.'[2]

Boreel suggested that a judicious outlay of money in England might restore the balance. De Witt's reply to this proposal is characteristic both of his high ideas of political morality and his dislike of needless expense. 'Those,' he said, 'who do not for their own interests of State punctually 'keep and follow up their word given under hand and seal, 'cannot be brought to do so by caresses and entertainments or 'by the spending of a round sum of money; it is thought better 'to spend that money on the equipment of ships and recruiting 'of troops, so as to make ourselves considerable thereby.'[3]

[1] The English minister in Paris, Montagu, wrote to Arlington on January 17, 1671: 'By all that I can guess the Dutch are in the greatest security in the 'world and suspect nothing less.' This may have been true at that date, but it did not long remain so. Buccleuch MSS. (Hist. MSS. Commission), I.

[2] De Witt to Boreel, February 20, 1671: *Brieven*, iv. p. 188. [3] *Ibid.*

It was an excellent principle, and if the second part of it had been more thoroughly carried out the Republic might yet have been saved. The failure to keep old allies and the neglect to secure new ones[1] made the question of home defence by land and sea one of life and death. De Witt set himself resolutely to the task of increasing army and navy in the autumn of 1670. Provincial and municipal jealousy and opposition delayed the most necessary measures for several months. The city of Amsterdam, under the leadership of De Witt's jealous enemy, Burgomaster Valckenier, refused to consent to extra taxation, or to support any increase in the army or navy, unless certain taxes which pressed on her trade were first removed. In vain De Witt argued and persuaded, urging Van Beuningen, who was still in England, to intervene on behalf of the needs of the State.[2] Amsterdam must be won over, 'aut, meo quidem judicio, actum erit de re-'publica.' At length, on December 20, 1670, a unanimous vote was secured in the States of Holland for raising ten new infantry and six cavalry regiments, a total of 3,000 horse and 14,000 foot,[3] and for equipping thirty-six new ships of the line, twelve frigates, twelve fire ships and 'galiots.'

No sooner was Holland at unity than the other provinces began to make difficulties. Their patriotism was apt to be limited by their geographical frontiers and provincial interests. Utrecht, in November 1670, addressed an eloquent letter to the States-General not only consenting to the new levies but urging the fortification of the Ijssel frontier and the towns and country houses along it, in case of an attack by the Bishop of Münster.[4] But it was by no means so certain that she or the other inland provinces, Gelderland and Overijssel, would

[1] Van Beverningk concluded an alliance of mutual defence with Spain in 1671; this was the only diplomatic step taken by the Republic to counteract the overwhelming influence of France in all the European Courts.

[2] 'It is greatly to be feared that, by difference of opinion . . . we shall 'infallibly draw upon ourselves the evil which could be prevented by reasonable 'contributions for the common good and by the necessary armaments.' De Witt to Van Beuningen, October 21, 1670: *Brieven*, iv. p. 99.

[3] Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies des Pays Bas*, iv. p. 189.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 191.

consent to share in the expense of the naval armament. The States-General addressed a strong letter to all three, threatening that, unless the land provinces consented to the naval armament, the sea provinces would give no help to the new military forces. The letter had its effect and the eastern provinces consented to pay their quotas, only reserving the right to use their funds for their own defence if the Rhine and Ijssel frontiers were not at once attended to by the State.[1]

But the most serious trouble arose in Zeeland. Ever since Odijk had been installed there by William as Deputy Governor he had exploited the affairs of that province for his own family interests. He now, in January 1671, for a petty private reason, refused consent to the new 'state of 'war.' The two 'pocket-boroughs' of the Prince of Orange, Veere and Flushing, followed Odijk's lead, with the result that the States of Zeeland held up the most vital measures of State defence for more than two months.

De Witt was beside himself with vexation. 'It seems 'that the humours of these people must always be possessed 'by a spirit of contrariness,' he said to De Groot.

Only one person could rescue the country from so humiliating a situation. William of Orange returned to the Hague on February 28, 1671, from his visit to the English Court.[2] He had passed hastily through Zeeland, without stopping to enquire into its affairs, and it was not until the next day at evening that he received a full account of the doings of Odijk.[3] His informant may have been the Princess Dowager who had complained that Odijk was a 'brouillon,' and had threatened to speak to William about him. Without a moment's hesitation he sent an express posting through the dark with imperative orders that all opposition to the war budget must cease immediately. Next day he saw De Witt, explained that he had been kept in ignorance of the matter

[1] Wicquefort, iv. pp. 284–287.
[2] See below, Chap. IV.
[3] Wicquefort, iv. p. 289 and note.

until his return and told him what he had done. De Witt knew that Zeeland would give no more trouble.[1]

William, by this swift action, had shown in no doubtful manner where lay his loyalties. He had rendered a service of first-rate importance to the State, and with a word had solved an 'impasse' with which even De Witt was powerless to deal. Such an incident should have convinced De Witt that his carefully trained Child of State was a good Dutchman after all. Actually the very power and influence it revealed in the 'Oranjespruit' increased rather than diminished his Republican fears. Less than a year later he was cribbing with most disastrous restrictions the powers of the young Captain-General to whom States and people alike had entrusted the armies of the Republic.

[1] De Witt to De Groot, March 5, 1671: *Brieven*, iv. p. 160. On the 12th he wrote that Zeeland had given its consent and that the final conclusion had been taken in the States-General.

CHAPTER IV

The Rise of the Prince of Orange, April 1670–February 1672

By the month of March, 1670, all the provinces of the Union had accepted De Witt's 'Project of Harmony.'[1] The way was clear for giving the Prince that seat in the Council of State which had in honour been promised him. The Council of State had been, in the time of William the Silent and the early years of Maurice, the executive committee of the States-General, and had exercised control over foreign affairs and especially over the army and fortresses of the Republic. Owing chiefly to the presence on it, during the last years of Elizabeth and the first of James I, of three English representatives, the States-General had gradually withdrawn from it all real power in State affairs. The only important function which remained to it in the seventeenth century was that of drawing up each year the 'State of War' or budget of home defence, to be presented to the States-General. The Council had no control over the appointment of officers or the methods by which troops were raised. The Provincial States exercised an almost complete authority over the troops for which they paid.[2]

The Council consisted of twelve members, of whom three represented Holland, and until 1650 the Stadtholders of Holland and of Friesland always had seats at its board. It was responsible only to the States-General. Membership was considered rather a burden than a privilege, for it

[1] See above, p. 39. The Project secured that no Captain-General should ever be Stadtholder of any province.

[2] See p. 14 above.

had no authority, but was sometimes used as a scapegoat for the sins and omissions of the States-General or the provincial States.[1]

It is strange that De Witt should have thought it worth while to combat as he did the admission of William to so powerless and inferior a body as the Council of State. He had promised the seat as soon as the Provinces had agreed to the separation of the Stadtholderate from the Captain-Generalship. Yet when the time came all his old fears were aroused again. He used every means in his power to make the privilege as worthless as possible. The cause of his misgivings was shrewdly diagnosed by Pomponne, the French Ambassador, who wrote to Louis XIV: 'This first step is 'regarded by the friends of the Prince of Orange as capable 'of leading on to everything else, and this reason is the cause 'of all the Grand Pensionary's opposition.'[2] His defeat at every point showed that he was no longer master of that vast influence in Dutch politics which had sustained him for seventeen years as virtual head of the State.[3] The opposition of Valckenier in Amsterdam to everything De Witt wished or proposed in the States of Holland was fiercer than ever. Valckenier was determined to make the question of William's admission to the Council of State a test-case, to decide whether his influence or De Witt's was the more powerful in Holland.

De Witt first tried to limit William's influence in the Council to an 'advisory vote'—that is to say to a vote which would not count as valid in a division. The 'conclusive 'vote' demanded for him by Haarlem and Amsterdam would give him an equal status with the other members of the Council. De Witt gained a majority in the States of Holland and used all his influence to induce the other provinces to agree to his wishes. But Zeeland, Utrecht and Gelderland voted for the conclusive vote in the States-General on March 30. Even

[1] Müller, *Onze Gouden Eeuw*, i. [2] Mignet, iii. p. 611.

[3] For the decline of De Witt's influence from this time onward, see Japikse, *Johan De Witt*, chap. xvii.

then De Witt strained his personal influence with van Dijkveld, one of the Utrecht Deputies, to get the decision of his province somehow altered or explained away.[1] On April 10 he wrote to Vivien of Dordrecht, then in Utrecht, to use what influence he had with the States of Utrecht to induce them to 'disavow the action' of their Deputies in the States-General, and 'conform with the advice of the States of Holland.' He was partially successful, for Utrecht did write to its Deputies telling them to keep silence on the matter until they received further instructions. He even persuaded a deputation from all the provinces except Zeeland, which was enthusiastically in favour of the Prince, to wait on William and urge him to be content with an 'advisory vote,' hoping to save further trouble by winning over the Prince. He might have spared them the visit. William met the deputation by a firm refusal to enter the Council without a 'conclusive vote.' He thus made his own position clear, but he was scrupulously careful to avoid entering into any intrigues with Haarlem or Amsterdam. Nor was he inclined to put his affairs into the hands of the French Ambassador. 'The Prince of 'Orange,' wrote Pomponne on May 1, 'forgets nothing in 'this business which depends upon his industry and wits, and 'acts throughout with much ability. Neither he nor the 'Grand Pensionary speak to me of their intents, perhaps 'because they fear to render themselves suspect to one another 'by addressing themselves to France.'[2]

At length De Witt proposed a compromise to which he hoped both Haarlem and Amsterdam would agree. He proposed that William should be given a conclusive vote, but that he should not be present when the affairs of his relatives in the fourth degree (*i.e.* the Kings of France and England) were under discussion, and that when the time came for him to be elected Captain-General, the appointment should only last for one campaign, unless the States of Holland unani-

[1] De Witt to van Dijkveld, March 30, 1670: *Brieven*, iv. p. 27.
[2] Mignet, iii. p. 612.

mously decreed otherwise. Haarlem appeared to agree to this. But Burgomaster Valckenier was determined that Amsterdam should yield in no point to the Grand Pensionary. On May 24 the final debate took place in the States of Holland. The Amsterdam Deputies had been instructed to have nothing to do with any compromise. They held out steadily for a conclusive vote without conditions. Dordrecht, De Witt's own city, was almost alone in opposing the unconditional conclusive vote.[1] And so 'as bad luck would have it' wrote De Witt next day, 'other towns not daring to go against so 'considerable a town' as Amsterdam, a conclusive vote was accorded, not indeed unanimously, but by a large majority.[2] The only condition De Witt succeeded in attaching was that relating to the duration of the Captain-Generalship. Even to this Haarlem and some small towns withheld their consent until next day, and Amsterdam refused it entirely.[3]

On June 2, De Witt, making a virtue of necessity as the French Ambassador said, himself conducted William before the 'Gecommittende Raaden'—the standing committee of the States of Holland—where the Prince swore that he had used no corrupt influence in obtaining this seat. They next proceeded to the Assembly of the States-General, to whom he took the oath of fidelity. Then William, accompanied by three Deputies from Holland, Zeeland and Groningen, descended the stairs to the chamber occupied by the Council of State. To the dismay of his companions, he walked in front of them into the room instead of allowing one of them to precede him. He took an ordinary seat at the board.

Thus, in the midst of much controversy and jealous misgivings, began the public life of William III. Some good republicans saw even in this tardy and limited elevation

[1] MS. notes of Bontemantel, Deputy of Amsterdam (Amsterdam archives). The French Ambassador said that the dispute in the States reached reproaches and threats.

[2] For an advisory vote: Dordrecht and the Nobles. For the conclusive vote with De Witt's conditions: Leiden. The rest voted with Haarlem and Amsterdam. Bontemantel, MS. Notes.

[3] The decision of Holland was repeated in the States-General on June 2, on the same day that William took his seat in the Council.

the death sentence of the 'vrijheid.' 'We have laid the first 'stone of a building,' said one of them to De Witt, 'that will 'so menace our freedom and our families that we shall be in 'ceaseless fear of troubles and difficulties.' Nor were these fears altogether idle. On June 5, while De Witt was away in Groningen, an attempt was made in the States-General to introduce William into that assembly, 'not in his capacity as 'member of the Council of State, but as Prince of Orange, after 'the manner of his father and grandfather.' [1] If the attempt had succeeded, wrote Cornelis de Witt to his brother, 'the 'credit and respect of the table of their High Mightinesses 'would have been surrendered to the Lord Prince of Orange.' [2] So great even then was the supposed influence of this untried and somewhat enigmatical young man.[3] The members of Holland who were present protested strongly against any such proceeding until the States of Holland had considered the matter. The other provinces, except Zeeland, at length acquiesced, and, to the immense relief of the defenders of the 'vrijheid' the proposal was dropped. William did indeed from time to time appear in the States-General as a member of the Council of State when that body had its reports to make to its superiors. But he did not take a permanent seat in it for two years to come.

A few days after his introduction into the Council, the Prince schooled himself to perform a ceremony which must have been singularly galling. He paid a call on every member of the States of Holland, to thank them for the honour they had been pleased to do him. When he came to the lodging of the deputies of Amsterdam he was told they were out, and

[1] Van Asperen to De Witt, June 7, 1670. *Brieven aan De Witt*, ii. p. 505. William's advocates claimed that the phrase in his 'commission'—'that His 'Highness shall appear on request in the assembly of their High Mightinesses '(*i.e.* the States-General) or in the Council of State'—justified their demand. Holland replied that these words only gave him power to appear in the States-General when summoned as an ordinary Member of the Council, and contained no promise of a seat such as his fathers had occupied.

[2] Cornelis De Witt to De Witt, June 6, 1670. *Ibid.* p. 503.

[3] William himself had asked the President of the week (a Frieslander) to give him leave to hear the report of the Heer van Wassenaar lately returned from a complimentary visit to the King of France.

on repeating the call later met with the same reply. On their return two of them insisted on returning the Prince's call without delay, but the third, Bontemantel, a staunch upholder of the 'vrijheid' and opponent of Valckenier's policy, would have prevented even this civility. The Prince, he said, had merely asked as he rode by whether they were at home, and had not even inquired when it would be convenient to call, 'and this looked like a slight.' His companions at last induced him to accompany them, and so a scandal was avoided.[1]

With his entry into the Council of State William considered himself grown up and emancipated from the educational control of the States. His governor, Van Gent, whom he hated, and whose life in the household of so ungracious a pupil had become a burden to himself as well as to the Prince, applied for his own dismissal soon after William entered the Council. The other Commissioners of Education resigned.[2]

William's mind, in this summer of 1670, was set not on the details of committee work in the Council of State, but on a visit to his uncle's Court in England. The object of the visit was ostensibly financial, to recover the debts due to him by Charles II, for both Charles and his father had contracted debts to the House of Orange. But William's personal motive in making the visit was a burning curiosity to see and pass his judgment upon that King, Court and country with whom he knew his future must be so intimately bound. The Prince knew that it would not be easy to obtain the consent of the States to such a journey, and he set about the task with great caution.

In June 1670 he sent his physician and trusted servant, Dr. Rompf, to England to discuss the possibilities of the visit with Arlington. The mission was carried out in the strictest secrecy. William wished to be assured first that his visit would not prejudice his interest with the States, for his

[1] Bontemantel, *De Regeeringe van Amsterdam*, i., Introduction.
[2] Wicquefort, iv. p. 124.

introduction into the Council had been but a 'weake busi-'nesse' and some 'good patriots' hoped to obtain more for him. In particular he was anxious to avoid Van Beuningen, who had arrived in England as Dutch Ambassador a fortnight before Rompf left Holland. If Van Beuningen was likely to fail in his mission about some commercial matters, William would prefer not to come until the ambassador had left England, because, as he astutely remarked, 'the ill-affected 'may lay all the fault upon His Highness.' On the other hand, if Van Beuningen's business were running smoothly, the Prince would have no objection to being associated with him in it, in order to raise his credit with the States.[1]

In all this there was no word about seeking the help of England towards his restoration. Burnet's statement[2] that the chief motive of his visit was 'to try what offices the king 'would do in order to his advancement to the Stadtholdership,' is entirely without foundation, though common gossip, from which Burnet drew so much of his information, may well have spread that report. William's political position in Holland was never discussed, either by Rompf and Arlington at their preliminary meeting or by William himself, when he came, in his conversations with Charles. He perceived with his singularly clear and balanced mind that the true way to obtain that which he so ardently desired did not lie through the recommendations of his Stuart uncles. More admirable than his perspicacity was the wise patience and self-restraint which enabled him to forego the chance of a speedy and effortless restoration. For, had he shown himself a whit more forthcoming, Charles would have initiated him gladly into the mysteries of Dover.

Dr. Rompf accomplished his mission,[3] and Arlington, after discussing the matter with the King and the Duke of York, requested the Prince to prepare for his visit at the beginning of October, by which time it was hoped that Van

[1] Instructions to Dr. Rompf in *Select Letters of William III.*
[2] Burnet, i. p. 474, ed. 1823.
[3] Report of Rompf in P.R.O. King William's Chest, I.

Beuningen, whose work was not going well, would be gone, and that Parliament would assist in the repayment of the debts. He added one other reason for William's coming. His Highness might well some day 'without a miracle attain to 'the crown,' and it would be advisable that he 'show himself 'to the people.' William was indeed the Protestant heir, remembered while James's little daughter at Twickenham was forgotten, and his coming was awaited with hope and interest by a people who were already looking forward with misgiving to the rule of a Roman Catholic monarch.

Early in October William informed the States of Holland of his intended journey. To have withheld leave would have been asking for trouble, and nothing much was said, save that Dordrecht thought that whereas the Prince had referred to the King of England *our* uncle, he should have said *my* uncle because he was addressing his sovereigns the States.[1] After this petty grumble, leave was granted for his visit, on condition that he was in no way associated with Van Beuningen.[2]

The Dutch people were by no means ready to let their darling go. Never any luck had come of journeys to England, and he would die there and never return, like his mother and the Queen of Bohemia.[3] Nevertheless they could not prevent young Lord Ossory coming to fetch him 'with fifty-'six English Lords, and six Royal Trumpeters all in their 'red-brown livery with blue tunics on which stood the letters 'C. R.' William himself took with him about a hundred persons, among whom were old Huygens his faithful private secretary, his uncle and ex-governor Zuylestein, and William Bentinck, already the dearest of his friends.

A succession of west wind storms delayed their departure until the beginning of November. William arrived in

[1] Van der Goes, *Briefwisseling*, ii. p. 159.

[2] 'Some Provinces in the States-General advised that His Highness should 'be kept in constant communication with you, but the States of Holland 'instruct me to tell you that this is only to be regarded as complimentary, and 'gives by no means any permission to admit the Prince into your negotia-'tions either directly or indirectly.' De Witt to Van Beuningen, October 3, 1670, *Brieven*, iv. p. 92.

[3] Wicquefort, iv. p. 121 n.

Margate on November 10. As he went by barge up the Thames from Gravesend a resounding salute burst forth from the Tower battlements. He was installed in the Cockpit at Whitehall, overlooking St. James's Park, and at once found himself plunged into a whirl of festivities. The Prince, used to going to bed at ten and 'preferring cock-ale to any sort of 'wine,' was for the first time faced with late hours and riotous suppers, at which he was the guest of men who had long discarded every vestige of behaviour and self-restraint. Buckingham succeeded one night in breaking down his maiden reserve, and plied him with strong drink until he was as wild as the rest.[1] But, except for that one outbreak, and perhaps the more because of it, William preserved a gravity and dignity which won golden opinions from those Englishmen to whom the beastliness of Charles's Court was a source of disgust and shame. Evelyn praised his 'manly, courageous, 'wise countenance.' The Nonconformists of the City, headed by the Mayor and Corporation with whom he dined in the Draper's Hall, were delighted with his affection for all Protestant churches, which he did not attempt to conceal, as well as with his steady and decorous manners.[2] His native Calvinism was nearer to their Nonconformity in doctrine and ritual than to the Church of England. Sentiments such as his were rare indeed from persons of royal birth. At that dinner-party were laid the foundations of the great alliance between the Prince of Orange and the City of London on which much of the safety of the Revolution Settlement was afterwards to depend.

Had these merchant princes known all that went on between Charles and his nephew behind closed doors they would have been still better pleased with their guest. Charles was

[1] Reresby, *Memoirs*.

[2] 'Sa sagesse et sa retenue semblaient condamner les divertissements du Roi. Son assiduité et son exactitude à remplir tous les devoirs de la religion lui conciliaient la faveur populaire': Pomponne: *Mémoires*, quoted by Pontalis, ii. 164.

engaged during this autumn of 1670 in completing the work of the Treaty of Dover. It was necessary that a treaty be drawn up which was fit for the public eye, and which Charles's Protestant ministers, in particular Ashley and Buckingham, would be able to sign. To this end the 'sham treaty' was concocted and signed by all five of Charles's cabal[1] on December 31. It differed from the Treaty of Dover in fixing the date of the joint declaration of war for the spring of 1672, and in omitting Charles's proposed conversion of himself and England. The £2,000,000 which Charles was to receive in payment for his change of religion was to be paid him at once, and was described in the treaty as a necessary 'préparatif' for the war. Arlington had spent the autumn wringing this concession out of Colbert de Croissy, who saw that Charles was in no hurry to make his declaration and had threatened to hold up the £2,000,000 until he did so. Louis was in such terror that Arlington would, even at this eleventh hour, bring the whole scheme to ruin by revealing it to the Dutch, that he told Colbert on November 15 to make no further difficulties. Thus Charles was virtually freed from any obligation to declare himself a Roman Catholic, and with the £2,000,000 in advance and a grant of £800,000 from an unsuspecting Parliament,[2] he was free to proceed with equipping the fleet.

Into the secret of these negotiations Charles was more than half inclined to admit his nephew. He even hinted very broadly at his own change of religion, and suggested to William that it was high time he stopped being 'led by Dutch 'blockheads.' To these invitations William listened with amazement, and, it would seem, with ill-concealed disgust.[3]

[1] Clifford had signed the Treaty of Dover with the 'Catholic' clause: Buckingham, Ashley, Lauderdale and Arlington were signatories of the December Treaty. Arlington, though he was perfectly aware of all the Treaty of Dover contained, did not actually sign it.

[2] Parliament granted Charles this large sum for defence in case of need, because the armaments proceeding both in Holland and France were arousing suspicion in England.

[3] Burnet, i. 475, ed. 1823 He states that his information comes from the Prince himself.

Charles saw that he was not to be drawn, and soon afterwards observed laughingly to Colbert that William was 'too passionately Dutch and Protestant' to be admitted into the plot against his country.

Whatever William may have suspected, he could not reveal to others what his uncle and host had told him in confidence and what was in any case far from explicit. His only confidant was his uncle Zuylestein. But he 'carried it always in his own mind' and checked each one of Charles's future actions 'from the discovery he had then made of his sentiments.'[1]

In order to keep him out of the way while the 'sham treaty' was being completed, William was sent to receive honorary degrees at Oxford and Cambridge. Cambridge merely conferred on him an M.A. without much ceremony, but cavalier Oxford gave him a royal welcome. The High was lined with scholars holding torches in the December dusk as his coach came in over Magdalen Bridge. He was made a D.C.L., lodged in Christ Church, entertained at every college in turn with loyal speeches and finally dismissed with a copy of 'Eikon Basilike.' Oxford knew what was due to a grandson of Charles the Martyr.

William remained in England until February 1671, trying to induce his uncle to discharge the debt he owed him. The length of his stay began to arouse De Witt's suspicions,[2] and his grandmother, who had never liked the journey, urged him to come back. He arrived in the Hague 'incognito' on February 28, having left Huygens behind to finish the financial negotiations.[3] Though, with that dislike of publicity which later made him so unpopular in London, he ordered a closed

[1] Burnet, i. p. 475, ed. 1823.

[2] Wicquefort, iv. p. 122. He was suspected of trying to induce both France and England to bring about his 'advancement.'

[3] Huygens did not return to the Hague until October. He succeeded in wringing from the Government a promise for the payment to William of his mother's dowry, but of the other debts nothing was as yet forthcoming. The dowry money was not paid until March, 1672. Huygens: *Briefwisseling*, vi, Introduction, p. xviii.

coach so as to avoid observation, the people would not be balked and cheered him heartily as he drove through the streets.[1]

De Witt was deluding himself during the spring and early summer of 1671 with false hopes of peace,[2] though he was no longer blind to the threatening attitude of France, or to the dangers of relying on English support. He pushed on in the States ways and means for the new armaments, in the hope that 'we shall not be entirely destitute of means to 'resist the enemies of the State in case of attack.' He proposed an alliance with England of mutual defence against all attack, each country to rely plainly on the other's word without any money payments or other advantages. When England demanded more substantial conditions, he showed his proud idealism by declaring that if the King of England could not see that his interest lay in preserving the integrity of the States, and would not accept or give a simple word of honour, no promises or bribes would avail to win him.[3] News of the treaty of Dover, and even of the 'grand design' for the conversion of England by French arms, continued to leak through, but De Witt still thought them 'entirely 'incredible, though not to be absolutely disregarded.'[4]

As the winter drew on, the Dutch watched with anxiety the mobilising of the French army at Dunkirk, while the French Ambassador grew more and more cold and haughty. England began to show her hand by picking quarrels about the salute of the flag in the Channel and other minor points. The demand for the immediate elevation of the Prince to the Captain-Generalship grew persistent throughout the Republic, and was even supported by some statesmen in Holland. Among the other provinces, Gelderland was the most conspicuous in its advocacy of the Prince. In May 1671 it had

[1] Sylvius, *Vervolg aan Aitzema*, i. p. 133.
[2] De Witt to De Groot, April 20, 1671, *Brieven*, iv. p. 164.
[3] De Witt to Boreel, May 1, 1671, *Brieven*, iv. p. 195.
[4] De Witt to De Groot, March 5 and May 8, 1671. *Brieven*, iv. pp. 161, 165.

demanded that William be paid an annual pension of £50,000 for his services in the Council of State. Holland had refused to agree, and in October Gelderland in the States-General required an audience with Holland on the subject, referring to William as Captain- and Admiral-General designate of the Union. Holland, with rash indignation, declared that Gelderland had thereby broken the Act of Harmony, which postponed all consideration of William's affairs until he was twenty-two years old. She insisted that the offending resolution be razed from the registers of the States-General. Gelderland complied for the time, but at the end of November her Deputies, at the peremptory orders of her Provincial States, made a formal request in the States-General for his immediate nomination. Holland registered a formal protest, declaring that Gelderland had again broken the Act of Harmony, and that she could henceforward have no voice in the Prince's affairs.[1]

Shortly after this *fracas* a conversation took place between De Witt and the Prince on the same subject. De Witt remarked that the difference of opinion about the Captain-Generalship prevented any satisfactory resolutions being taken about the new armaments—which had indeed been allowed to fall into the background. William, who was weary of the long quarrel, spoke out, challenging De Witt to face the realities instead of the formalities. 'I am in my 'twenty-second year,' he said: 'why do you not make me 'Captain-General? Your difficulties would then be at an end.'

De Witt's answer was cold and bitter. 'I think you must be laughing,' he said; 'you must know that nothing can be done till the twenty-two years are completed.'[2]

De Witt was clinging to artificial excuses which necessity would soon break down. Holland itself was divided on the matter, and a strong party was pushing forward the elevation of the Prince without further delay.

[1] Wicquefort, iv. p. 298–301.
[2] Basnage, *Annales des Provinces Unies*, ii. p. 170.

'Some good patriots,' wrote De Witt, 'whom the Lord 'God has not exactly endowed with the greatest constancy and 'courage,' are advising an absolute reliance on England, 'who, 'we are assured, will undertake the defence of this State with 'vigour' if the Prince of Orange is made Captain-General. These men argued that the State could never hope to withstand the onslaught of France unaided, and that the choice lay between falling a prey to France or throwing themselves into the arms of England, and the elevation of the Prince must be the price. 'That remedy,' said De Witt, 'would be 'worse than the disease.'[1] He has been accused of gross partisanship on account of that phrase. Yet, if the Prince's elevation had indeed meant, as De Witt then feared, falling 'under the protection of and into absolute dependence on 'England,' little indeed would have been left of the independence of the Republic.[2] As it was, nothing that Holland could do for the Prince was destined to change the attitude of Charles II, safely sold to France. So neither De Witt's fears nor the hopes of William's supporters were justified.

But, as even De Witt realised, the demand for William was no passing fancy, but 'a rising fire that will not be kept 'back.' It had begun with a proposal by the Deputies of Enckhuysen in the States of Holland on December 5, 1671, that William should be made Captain-General at once. In opposing the adoption of the measure it is impossible to deny that De Witt made use of arguments which were mere pretexts for evading the larger issue. He pointed out that William had not yet reached the age of twenty-two, and was therefore as yet ineligible for military office. This, he said, was a law of the Republic.[3] De Witt succeeded, by an eloquent disquisition on this and other 'peremptory laws,' in preventing the formal consideration of Enckhuysen's demand.

[1] De Witt to De Groot, December 10, 1671. *Brieven*, iv. p. 178.

[2] De Witt even hoped that the French might yet be dissuaded from going to war with the Republic by fear of English influence which would inevitably be increased, as he thought, by the Prince's elevation: De Witt to De Groot, December 10, 1671. *Ibid.*

[3] See *Resolution van Consideratie*, December 19, 1657.

On the same day, however, the permanent Committee of the States of Holland advised unanimously that William be made Captain-General, instead of merely accompanying the Deputies to the field, 'in a political capacity.' They adhered to this demand 'in spite of all the earnest and reiterated re-'presentations which I made to the contrary.'[1] They were supported by the Deputies of Haarlem, Leiden, Amsterdam and Enckhuysen. The small towns all inclined to the same opinion, so that the only towns on which De Witt could depend to uphold his fast crumbling paper bulwark were Dordrecht (his own city), Rotterdam and Delft. On December 16 the City Council of Amsterdam approved the advice of the Committee and proposed that an Instruction be immediately drawn up for sending the Prince as Captain-General to the field. How deeply the national demand for the Prince's leadership, and the hope that England's friendship might yet be won by his elevation, had penetrated even the most hardened Republican minds, can be judged from the reasons which induced Bontemantel, stern defender of the 'vrijheid' though he was, to vote for the Prince's advancement at the Amsterdam Council Board. 'To gain the 'alliance of England and Brandenburg: because the army are 'much inclined to him, because it is said that Marshal Wirtz 'desires to go into the field under a Captain-General; because 'the people are crying out for him; because the Six Provinces 'insist thereupon steadily and the Gecommitteerde Raeden 'are of the same opinion and the most considerable members 'of Holland have declared for him.' Another added: 'It 'will also satisfy the preachers.'[2]

Seeing that opposition was hopeless, De Witt had characteristically determined to take the lead and make the appointment as harmless as possible. One weighty reason for yielding was that only so would the other provinces be moved to contri-

[1] De Witt to his brother, December 10. *Brieven*, iv. p. 216.

[2] See *Brieven*, iv. p. 217 n. 1, quoting from Bontemantel's MSS. Resolutien van den Raad.

bute to the war budget. Gelderland had already declared that she would not pay unless the Prince were advanced. Great emphasis was laid on the hope of gaining England and thus being secured against France.[1] And with naïve honesty De Witt at last admitted the breakdown of the laws against youthful generals. 'All resolutions,' he said, 'tacitly admit 'that their execution must not conflict with the safety of the 'Fatherland.'

Dordrecht, almost alone, moved the rejection of the proposal. She deprecated the concession to popular and clerical feeling—'it is a pitiable government that will listen to the 'clergy'—and with more truth than she was perhaps aware of, declared that England would not be won by the Prince's elevation, and even if she were, 'must we therefore be 'enslaved?' But against the combined weight of Haarlem, Leiden and Amsterdam she could do nothing, and the States resolved on December 8, 1671, that an Instruction for the Captain-General be at once drawn up.[2]

Now arose a question on which for two months more the States were bitterly divided, while the war-clouds grew ever more intense and the hopes of England ever fainter. Should the Prince be appointed for life, or for one campaign only? The deadly fear of making possible once more the events of 1650, in spite of the abolition of the Stadtholderate, by the appointment of a permanent Captain-General, stalked like a spectre before the minds of the Governors of Holland. A Captain-General, argued Dordrecht, Rotterdam and Delft, will always be seeking to increase the army and lead the country into war.

All these arguments were political and speculative—essentially unpractical. How little—how dangerously little—did either side realise the country's dire need of a leader, beloved, responsible and courageous! In the face of that

[1] 'Et on attend sur cela l'advis et la bienveillance d'Angleterre, en jamais,' letter from the Hague, February 21, 1672. P.R.O., Holland 188.

[2] Wagenaar, xiii. p. 448.

need the proposal to appoint him 'for one campaign' was as preposterous as the Duke of Norfolk's suggestion that the starving masses in the 'hungry forties' should stay their cravings with curry powder dissolved in water. Nor did they appear to consider at all that no army or officer could confide for a moment in such a temporary general.

On January 5, 1672, the States of Holland presented to the States-General the proposed Instruction,[1] whose scope was limited enough apart from the question of the length of the appointment. The Captain-General must have no offices, civil or military, in his gift, must give no patents (marching orders) in his own name, must interfere in no way with the government, finance or internal affairs of any province, and must exercise no authority in any State or town unless empowered by the same province. He was in all things to be subordinate to the Committee of Deputies in the Field, in whose name all orders were to be given and who were responsible only to the States-General.[2]

The States-General accepted the Instruction but demanded with an almost unanimous vote that William be appointed for life. On the 19th the States-General submitted to the States of Holland a Memorandum, appealing to them not to continue longer obstinate. They pointed out that the Six Provinces would maintain the Perpetual Edict, but that the army must have a head, and the head it wanted, for 'old and experienced 'though unloved' chieftains did more harm than good. In any case the Prince would be twenty-two in November. The provinces who made this demand stood 'naked to the war'—for Louis would fall first on the eastern frontiers—and they appealed to Holland not to thwart them. 'The love of the 'inhabitants,' they said, 'to the governors is of great 'importance, and the commission for one campaign will not 'be pleasing to them.'

The appeal fell on deaf ears. On January 21 the States

[1] Text in full in Sylvius, *Vervolg aan Aitzema*, i. p. 187.
[2] See further, p. 142 below.

of Holland resolved, 'while the Provinces persisted, the 'States of Holland would also persist and make no change.'[1] Two days later it was even resolved that, as the business of the Captain-General was indefinitely held up, Prince John Maurice and Field-Marshal Wirtz must be sent out as joint Field-Marshals. Such was the mentality which governed Holland in the hour of her peril.

At this crisis William thought the time had come to make his own position clear. He had just returned from an expedition to the Rijn and Ijssel frontiers of the Republic, with other members of the Council of State. He now gave De Witt and everyone else to understand that he would accept no commission unless it were for life.[2] This put the advocates of the 'one campaign' theory in a hopeless dilemma. De Witt realised the gravity of the position, and 'on the 'reiterated insistence of Delft and Gouda,' and with the approval even of Dordrecht, set about seeking a compromise.[3] On February 17 he obtained the consent of the States-General to the appointment of the Prince for one campaign, with the understanding that he would be re-appointed at the end of it by the unanimous vote of the provinces. Further than this Holland would not go. On February 24 William was formally appointed Captain- and Admiral-General for one campaign by the States-General. It is greatly to his credit that he did not in this hour of peril stickle over the life-appointment and thus risk the complete break-up of the Government. It was morally certain that his re-appointment would be for life, and with that he expressed himself content. Next day he was brought into the Assembly by Fagel, the Secretary, and requested to accept the office. Having answered their invitation, says an old historian'[4] 'with a winning modesty,' he took the oath and received his instructions in a silver box·

[1] See Wagenaar, xiii. p. 445 *sqq.* and Vivien en Hop, *Notulen Staten van Holland*, January and February, 1672.
[2] De Witt to Cornelis, January 26, 1672, *Brieven*, iv. p. 268.
[3] De Witt to De Groot, February 18, 1672.
[4] Sylvius, *Vervolg aan Aitzema*, i. p. 189.

He told them that he was sorry he had not the capacity to fill so high an office at such a time, but so far as inclination went, he had one so great that none had greater to serve the Fatherland, and in courage he promised he would not fall short of the best.

In England, where his elevation was supposed to produce such great political effects, it fell entirely flat. Boreel, the ambassador, himself inclined to the Orange party, alone prophesied that it would awaken in the Court 'great service 'and confidence towards the States.'[1] William had indeed been a mere pawn in the game of France and England, ever since the formation of the Treaty of Dover. He was expected to play a useful part in the coming destruction of Holland, but Louis had told Pomponne a year previously[2] that whatever the States did for the Prince, England's attitude would remain unchanged on account of 'résolutions qui sont déjà prises 'par d'autres plus grands motifs' (*i.e.* by the Treaty of Dover). Some Frenchmen thought that William would not hesitate to throw in his lot with Louis. D'Estrades had given it as his opinion in 1667 that, when in power, William would 'force' the States to help the King against Spain. 'This 'is his interest as he can never climb to the authority of his 'ancestors so long as the States are not involved in a war on 'land.'[3] Whether it was what D'Estrades called his 'interest' or not, nothing was further from William's mind and inclination than to make war on Spain on behalf of Louis XIV. Now that the whole might of France was directed against his own country, he attempted, even before the vote of February 24, to use his influence where he felt it would carry most weight—with the Court of England. In January 1672 he addressed a confidential letter to Charles with a view to inducing him, if it were by any means possible, to break

[1] Boreel to De Witt, February 27, 1672, *Brieven aan De Witt*, ii. See also Arlington to Sunderland, February $\frac{1}{2}\frac{5}{8}$, 1672, in *Arlington Letters*, ii. p. 357.

[2] Louis to Pomponne, February 27, 1671, Mignet, iii. p. 630.

[3] D'Estrades, *Lettres*, v. p. 380, ed. 1743: D'Estrades to Louis, June 30, 1667.

his alliance with France.[1] Several circumstances seemed to favour such a step. Sir George Downing was in the Hague, expressly sent by Arlington to aggravate every existing cause of quarrel between England and the States, 'in order that all 'the English may desire this war and concur whole-heartedly 'in it.'[2] He was demanding the unconditional salute of any single British vessel by the entire Dutch fleet when they met in the Channel, an unprecedented proposal, deliberately intended to provoke a refusal.[3] At the same time the whole country were calling for the immediate appointment of William as Captain-General. William determined to find out beforehand whether Charles was likely to withdraw his hostility at his nephew's intercession. He accordingly wrote to him secretly a letter in which he rated his own influence very high, in the hope of drawing from Charles a real declaration of his intentions.

'If,' he wrote, 'you are not too deeply engaged with 'France, you can never have a better opportunity than the 'present of obtaining from the States all you can desire, and 'if you will let me know what it is you want, I will undertake 'to procure it for you, so long as it is not directly contrary 'to the foundations of this Republic, in spite of M. De Witt 'and his cabal, who will thereby be defeated and I and my 'friends will be placed at the head of affairs.'

Had that letter fallen into De Witt's hands, he could have used it as a proof that his fears were justified and that William was seeking to 'enslave' the Republic to England. But the danger from France was infinitely greater and more pressing than that of any possible 'dependence on England,' and William, with a sounder judgment than De Witt, knew that it was impossible to mitigate it. He therefore concentrated on what he deemed to be the one faint chance of

[1] Costerus, *Historisch Verhael*, p. 430. *Bijdragen voor Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis*, part iv, p. 17; article by G. D. S. Schotel, '*Briefwisseling tusschen Karel II, Koning van Engeland, en Willem III, in* 1672.'

[2] Colbert de Croissy to Louis, November 5, 1671, Mignet, vol. iii.

[3] See Mignet, iii. p. 695.

splitting the royal confederacy. He knew he could count on the States-General and probably also on a majority of the States of Holland, to grant the demands of the King of England if they were assured that he would thereby cease to be 'engaged with France.' As for the 'defeat of M. de Witt,' William doubtless thought that the neutrality of England would be cheap at the price.

Charles let a month go by before he answered, and then showed that he was not to be drawn away from France. 'I 'am far from beleeving [*sic*]' he wrote, 'that you could 'effect what you should undertake, it is enough you have 'done your own business so well.' (This letter was written on February 26, just after William had been made Captain-General.) 'I must drive mine in the usual and open way.'[1]

The 'open way' was the completion, on February $\frac{1}{2}\frac{2}{3}$, of the third edition of the Treaty of Dover, to which the signatures of all five of Charles's ministers were appended, and which was destined for publication to the nation at large when war was declared. It was almost the same as that of December 31, 1670, and of course left out the clauses about the conversion of England. Shortly before, the States, now thoroughly alarmed, instructed Boreel to agree to all the demands that Sir George Downing had been making about the flag. They merely asked in return that Charles would promise to observe his engagements made to them in the Triple Alliance. Downing seized upon this mild entreaty as a pretext for breaking off the negotiation—if it could be dignified with such a term—and returned at once to England, being in fear, it was said, of the Dutch populace, whose hatred was openly expressed. Charles, who thought the Dutch were yielding so fast that he would find it almost impossible to quarrel with them, lodged Downing in the Tower as a punishment for not provoking them more. Arlington, however, was a match for even Boreel's submissiveness. He told

[1] *Bijdragen voor Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis*, Nieuwe Reeks, part iv. p. 9; article by Schotel, '*Briefwisseling tusschen Karel II, Koning van Engeland, en Willem III, Prins van Oranje-Nassau, in* 1672.'

Colbert de Croissy on February 11 that he would 'try to give 'an answer to Boreel's last memorandum full of demands so 'unreasonable that they cannot possibly be granted.'[1] Accordingly he raked up the old grievance that the Dutch had harboured 'rebel' officers in their army, demanded the destruction of an offending picture in the Stadhuis at Dordrecht, and finally claimed for Great Britain the sole right to fish in the 'British Seas'—a demand which Holland could not have granted without ruining one of her 'key industries.' As might have been expected, the States-General made no immediate reply to these absurd demands, but they sent Meerman, one of the Deputies of Leiden, to assist the despairing Boreel with his company and council, and if possible to plead with the King personally for some mitigation or respite. It was but a slender hope, and with heavy hearts De Witt and his friends realised at last that England was bent on their destruction. Too late they regretted in bitterness of spirit their surrender about the 'flag question.' They had gained nothing, and laid themselves open to accusations of cowardice and cringing to a foe who was determined to be implacable.

[1] Mignet, iii. p. 697–8.

CHAPTER V

The Outbreak of War

'The nations were at war without being angry, and the quarrel had been thought on both sides rather of the ministries than of the people.'

Temple, *Memoirs*, 1672–1679.

On December 10, 1671, the States-General addressed a memorial to Louis XIV through their ambassador, Pieter de Groot, humbly begging to know why they had lost his royal favour.[1] For his hostility was now only too clear. The removal of Pomponne to Sweden in June 1671, and the pointed omission to send a successor, Louis's visit to his troops in Flanders in that year, and his constantly increasing armies and navies were evidence that could not be disregarded. The States declared their steady adherence to the alliance of 1662, and offered to cancel their own armaments if only France would dispel their anxiety. De Groot was kept waiting for an audience until January 4, 1672.[2] After an unsatisfactory interview with Le Tellier, he was received by the King alone, to whom he presented the States' Memorial, and added with earnest entreaty, 'Sire, do but command us to 'disarm and we will obey. That act of obedience will make 'your greatness better known than will the number of your 'armies.' Louis's reply was an example of studied insolence and menace. He accused the States of 'debauching my allies 'and soliciting my royal cousins to enter into offensive leagues 'against me.' Such was his version of the Triple Alliance. He said that he would have still more troops by the spring, and that he would use them 'in the manner I shall judge the

[1] Mignet, iii. p. 657–8.

[2] *Ibid.* See also Van Dijk, *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Diplomatie*, letters of De Groot to Fagel.

'most convenient for the good of my State and for my glory.' He wrote in the same strain a letter to the States-General, ending ironically enough: 'Priant Dieu qu'il vous ait, 'très-chers grands amis, alliés et confédérés, en sa sainte et 'digne garde.'

'The hatred against our State,' wrote De Groot, 'has 'become so great that no change will be made in the designs 'formed against it, so long as they persuade themselves that 'these can be carried out successfully.'[1] This was indeed, to De Groot, the crucial question. He lamented the unpreparedness of the Republic by sea and land,[2] but he still tried to persuade himself that England would at the last moment adopt a policy of mediation instead of war. Charles, he argued, would not refrain from the war on account of the Prince of Orange, but for fear of his own subjects. He thought, erroneously, that the English people were informed of Charles's intention to bring in French troops to convert the nation, in which case, 'they will never suffer their fleet, 'commanded by the Duke of York and Prince Rupert, or by 'both, to be joined with the might of a King who, having 'transported a great part of his army thither, might use it 'for the purpose suspected.'[3]

Unfortunately, the English were not aware of the designs against their religious liberty. Parliament had been prorogued on April 22, 1671, after being coaxed into granting £800,000 for the equipment of fifty new ships and the payment of the King's debts. Charles used one of the few honest members of his Council, the Lord Keeper Bridgman, to persuade the House of Commons, by his 'politic simple discourse 'of foreign affairs,'[4] that the money would be needed for the maintenance of the Triple Alliance. All the same, the King's debts loomed so large an item in the Bill that 'a silence 'as of men ashamed and unwilling' accompanied the vote,

[1] Van Dijk, *op. cit.*
[2] See below.
[3] *Brieven aan de Witt*, ii. p. 580. De Groot to De Witt, January 1, 1672.
[4] Marvell, *Works*, vol. i. Familiar Epistles, November 28, 1670.

nemine contradicente. Owing to the postponement of the outbreak of war until 1672, the fleet was not at once equipped, in spite of the King of France's 'warlike progress' through Flanders in the summer of '71, and honourable members felt they had been duped.[1]

> 'The Senate, which should headstrong princes stay
> 'Let loose the reins and gave the realm away.'[2]

In January 1672 Boreel, the well-meaning and incompetent Dutch Ambassador, thus described the atmosphere of London. 'At Court no one dares speak to me, and few come 'to my house, and no one dares tell me anything there. The 'gentlemen in the knowledge of affairs whom I visit, do not 'answer my questions: everyone is reserved: *many wish things* '*otherwise*.'[3] Even so, he caught at every straw that seemed to promise a hope of peace. He again suggested an outlay of money, and besought that 'all small obstacles may be taken 'away and a good friendship built up.'[4] As the States had first surrendered every demand Charles made through Downing about the flag, and had conferred the Captain-Generalship on William, it is difficult to see what other 'obstacles' they could have removed.

The manner in which England finally broke with the Republic is of a piece with her behaviour towards her during the past year. Crooked dealings with ambassadors, disregard of public feeling, finally an unprovoked resort to hostilities before any formal declaration of war—it was a performance of which most Englishmen were ashamed, even at the time, though the Dutch were not popular and the prospect of renewing the old struggle on the sea against the 'Hogen 'Mogens' had attractions for those who cared not to look beneath the surface.

[1] Marvell, *Works*, vol. i. Familiar Epistles, November 28, 1670.
[2] Marvell, *Poems*.
[3] Boreel to De Witt, January 2, 1672, *Brieven aan De Witt*, vol. ii.
[4] *Ibid.*, February 27.

'The business was,' as Arlington candidly said in the Committee of Foreign Affairs on March 8, 'to break with 'them and yet to lay the break at their door.' [1] To this end Meerman, who had been sent on a special embassy of conciliation by the States-General, was to be told, with some asperity, that the King had been 'very ill dealt with': a 'categorical 'answer to the King's last paper' of February 3 (about the surrender of the right to fish in the North Sea) must be demanded; 'then see what countenance he bears,' said Lauderdale; 'ruffle him upon these points.' When he was sufficiently 'ruffled,' the English could say that the Dutch had lost their tempers, and proceed to war as the only alternative.

But it was not a question merely of the least inconvenient manner of breaking off relations with the Dutch. On March 5 orders were given in the Committee of Foreign Affairs to the Duke of York (Lord High Admiral) to put to sea with some men-of-war from Portsmouth harbour and 'seize and bring 'into port any vessels they may meet with, destroying any 'which resist.' In other words, the Dutch merchant fleet, homeward bound for Holland from Smyrna, was to be attacked in the Channel and, if possible, captured. Besides this, all Dutch ships in English ports were to be detained. No notice of these orders was made public.

The fleet was not yet ready to put to sea in its entirety. At the same time, the Government did not know where to look for money, for neither Louis's subsidies nor the 'stop on 'the exchequer' [2] could stay the bottomless voids in Charles's treasury. If the Smyrna fleet, supposed to be a richly laden argosy, could be captured before a formal declaration of war was made, and therefore before De Ruyter would be more than ordinarily on the alert, the Government would have some ready money in hand, and the popular imagination might even be stirred to enthusiasm for the war after such a notable naval achievement as the capture of a whole fleet.

[1] P.R.O., Foreign Entry Book, 177.

[2] See below, p. 198.

The idea of an embargo on Dutch shipping in British ports had been suggested to the Government by Sir Robert Holmes, an admiral with some experience in exploits against Dutch colonists and traders on the African Gold Coast. A Dutch fleet laden with salt was then lying in Cowes Road, and Sir Robert wrote to Arlington: 'If the salt be stopped, 'they will be in great want.'[1] No orders, however, were sent at that time, and on February 22 the ships set sail for Holland 'well pleased, for they rid in great fear all the time they were 'here.' To Holmes was entrusted the task of seizing the Smyrna fleet.

Of the King's ministers, the Earl of Lauderdale was the most enthusiastic for the attack on the Smyrna fleet. To 'declare by action rather than by words,' as he grandly called it, was to steal a march on the enemy, and would fill up time while Meerman and Boreel were being 'ruffled.' On March $\frac{11}{21}$, when the news from Sir Robert Holmes's squadron was anything but good, Arlington grew nervous. 'Very 'few ships will be brought in,' he said, 'and then what shall 'we say?' He wished to 'owne' openly that an embargo had been placed on Dutch shipping, to give some colour to the proceedings of Sir Robert Holmes. Lauderdale would not have the Government publicly committed to any orders. If the prizes taken during the next week were 'worth it,' the Government could speak out: if not, better pass over the affair in silence and declare war over the other points at issue—the flag and the King's memorandum of February 3.[2]

It is clear from the nervous or blustering tone of these discussions in the Committee of Foreign Affairs that the only justification for such orders as those of March $\frac{5}{15}$ would be the complete success of the undertaking. It failed ignominiously, and indignation in Holland and shame in England were the immediate and lasting results.

On March $\frac{13}{23}$, Holmes and 'the gallant Ossory,' Ormonde's son and William of Orange's most intimate English friend,

[1] Cal. S.P. Dom., 1671–2, p. 102. [2] P.R.O., Foreign Entry Book, 177.

with a squadron of five men-of-war, fell upon the fleet of sixty or seventy Dutch merchantmen and their escort of about six men-of-war, as they were passing through the Channel. Holmes, in his report of the fight, speaks of eleven convoys to fifty-six merchantmen. De Witt, on the other hand, said there were five Dutch men-of-war and nine English ships, increased on the second day to twelve. He is certainly in error about the English ships, which were five on the first day, seven on the second. Probably Holmes exaggerates the number of convoys, as no other account mentions more than five. Many of the merchantmen were, however, armed with powerful broadsides.[1]

Had the attack succeeded, prizes estimated at a million and a half sterling would have gone to swell Charles's treasuries. Holmes made three attacks on two consecutive days, being joined on the second day by two more ships. He sank one warship (according to De Witt's account 'not strongly 'manned,') and took three prizes, which, says Burnet, proved scarcely worth the powder spent on them.[2] The fleet, stoutly defended by its escort, made its way to the Texel without further loss. The Dutch claimed to have put the English flagship and one other vessel completely out of action, and to have damaged several others. 'They were 'so considerable in force and we so inconsiderable that no 'more could have been expected,' wrote one disappointed Englishman.[3]

In the Republic the attack had a salutary effect. The States of Gelderland and Overijssel, in spite of their exposed position on the eastern frontiers, had actually refused to consent to the raising of fourteen new foot regiments, on the ground that England would shortly throw over the French

[1] See Cal. S.P. Dom., p. 102, and *Letters of De Witt*, iv. 324.

[2] De Witt says that one of the ships was 'richly laden,' the second bore a cargo of silk from Messina, while the third was a small vessel containing wines from Malaga.

[3] Cal. S.P. Dom., p. 102. Evelyn in his diaries reflects the shame and dismay caused by this action among London citizens. See *Diary* for January 12, 1672.

alliance.[1] For the sake of this utterly groundless rumour they threw away a month of precious time, and as De Witt said, risked the loss of the whole State as well. The attack on the fleet left no more room for any such hopes, and the two refractory provinces bowed to the pressure of their Delegates in the States-General and gave the necessary consent.

Nothing now remained but to cover the fiasco of the naval engagement by a formal declaration of war. After the attack on the fleet, De Witt was disinclined to continue negotiations. He told Meerman that if he had treated anyone as the English had just treated the Dutch, he would regard with scorn any more 'complaisant' proposals on their part as a sign of weakness and cowardice.[2] Besides, there was no longer a grain of hope that the King or his Ministers would listen to any solution of the flag problem which the Dutch might propose. The last efforts of Meerman and Boreel to bring Arlington and Lauderdale to discuss a reasonable settlement broke down, and on March 27 (new style), Charles published a formal declaration of war.

The document was a slovenly enumeration of the petty wrongs which the English colonists were said to have suffered at the hands of the Dutch in the territory of Surinam, and ended with the old complaint about the failure of the Dutch fleet to salute the British flag. Such grievances, even if there had been any truth in them, were far too frivolous to urge as reasons for going to war. But what made the declaration so perfidious was the total disregard therein of all the solemn engagements which bound the Crown of England to the Dutch Republic in a close alliance for the defence of Europe against the ambitions of France. Charles spoke as though the Triple Alliance had never existed, though he added a clause at the end, to the effect that he would 'maintain the Peace of 'Aix and uphold its true content and meaning.' De Witt, in his anger, besought God 'sooner or later to punish according

[1] De Witt to Meerman, March 29: *Brieven*, iv. p. 261.
[2] To Meerman, March 29, 1672: *Brieven*, iv. p. 263.

'to its deserts the perfidy of the Court of England, committed 'alike against this State and her own nation.'

To William of Orange Charles wrote on April 22 a letter which the Prince must have blushed to read, so shuffling and specious were the excuses which the King alleged for thus making war on his country.

'I feare our correspondence must cease for some time,' he began, 'upon this misunderstanding between the States and me, though I assure you my kindnesse shall never change to you in the heart, and though our interests seem to be a little differing at this present, yet I have done you that service that if this ware had not fallen out, I am confident you had not so soon at least been in the post you are at present.'[1]

To such a notification of his uncle's goodwill towards him William did not deign to reply.

The declaration of war was not unpopular in England save among the few who, like Temple, saw in it the final surrender of England to the domination of France. The prospect of a sea war has seldom been disagreeable to the English, though traders soon found that 'it is very prejudicial 'to trade, occasioning grain to fall in price, as also wool and 'the manufactory of all woollen goods.' Rather it was the actions of the Government preceding and accompanying the declaration which aroused distrust and fear.

The wrong done to England by this war was indeed hardly less than that which had shattered the hopes of the Republic. Parliament had been prorogued since April 22, 1671, during which time Charles's financial necessities had been mainly supplied by Louis XIV. Two million pounds had been paid him in consideration of his early acceptance of the Roman Catholic faith, and in January 1672 he received £750,000 as a first instalment of the war expenses. Not content with this, he had suffered the British Navy to turn

[1] *Bijdragen voor Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis*, Nieuwe Reeks, part iv. p. 10; Schotel, '*Briefwisseling tusschen Karel II, en Willem III, in* 1672.'

pirate in the hope of capturing the Dutch argosy on its way to home waters. But the action which brought most discredit and unpopularity on the Government in this unworthy year was the 'stop on the Exchequer' with which Charles celebrated New Year's Day, 1672.[1] The great bankers of the city, who for some time past had lent money to Charles on usury of eight per cent. were informed that for a year they were not to expect any payment at all. Clifford, who originated the policy, was simply gambling on the success of the war and the spoils he hoped to glean after the conquest of the Dutch. That, he considered, should be enough to reassure greedy bankers who had already made fortunes out of the Government. The bankers, however, and their many thousands of creditors, saw in the transaction only a reckless attempt to ruin the nation in order to provide funds for an unpopular war in which France would certainly take the lion's share of the spoil.

Lord Ashley (shortly to be made Earl of Shaftesbury) disliked the scheme, and, as is now known, spent two hours trying to dissuade the King from adopting it.[1] When he failed to do so, he acquiesced in it, as Arlington had acquiesced in the betrayal of the Triple Alliance. Being himself Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time, Ashley not unnaturally was accused by his enemies, and later by Burnet, of proposing and approving the stop. He is cleared of that imputation, but there is no doubt that a far more subtle danger to English liberties did receive his full approval. This was the Declaration of Indulgence to Dissenters with which Charles preceded the outbreak of hostilities. The Declaration, issued on March 25, declared the suspension of all penal laws against Protestant dissenting sects, and granted leave to worship in private to Roman Catholics. It is probable that neither Arlington nor Ashley felt concerned with the constitutional issues of that measure, though in reality they far outweighed the religious. Ashley really desired some

[1] See Evelyn's *Diary*, March 12, 1672, and Burnet, i. 532, p. ed. 1823. Evelyn says Charles, by consenting to it, 'lost the hearts of his subjects.'

immediate measure of relief for Protestant dissenters, and did not consider that to give it by means of a Royal Declaration was in truth to invest the Crown with a power of dispensing with all laws. The clause of the Declaration granting liberty of worship to Roman Catholics in their own houses he thought negligible, though Clifford and the Duke of York built on it, and on the whole tenor of the Declaration, the hope that the abolition of all penal laws against papists would speedily follow. In their eyes the Declaration was a substitute for the defunct 'grand design.'

Clifford wished the Declaration itself to grant a larger measure of liberty to Roman Catholics. Half in jest, he told Charles, in the committee which discussed the Declaration on March 6, that by virtue of his powers as 'Supreme gover-'nor' of the Church in England, he 'might make a Vicar-'General above the Archbishop.'[1] He wished the Declaration simply to suspend all penalties against every brand of non-conformist, and leave all 'regulation' to a 'further settlement.' 'Phanaticks,' he complained, were 'to have churches, their 'ministers allowed by the King,' while papists might only meet 'privately in their houses and chappells, no churches.' But Charles was determined not to 'let loose conventicles,' and to 'regulate them at once, at one chopp settle a regula-'tion.' He had his way, and Clifford contented himself with the hope that 'all penal laws would be repealed which the 'Parliament made, in the near time to be repealed, as sune 'as the King can do it.'[2]

Arlington spoke little during these debates. He was little interested in religious matters, and since Parliament in the autumn of 1670 had urged a more rigorous execution of the laws against Romanists, he had deftly steered the King away from the policy of the 'grand design.' As he had secured the French king's subsidies in any case, whether Charles declared himself a convert or not, his interest in the religious side of the question had entirely died. Probably he would

[1] P.R.O., Foreign Entry Book, 177. [2] *Ibid.*

have been better pleased if Charles had refrained from issuing the Declaration of Indulgence. Parliament would almost certainly interpret it as a step towards bringing in Popery, and he had enough already to answer for to an angry House of Commons. He was therefore anxious, as far as possible, when he found the King bent on the Indulgence, to give it some appearance of legality. 'First see what the King's 'power is,' he said. 'Let Lord Ashley and the Treasurer '(Clifford) agree between this and Saturday as to what powers 'the King has by the laws, *i.e.* to remind what the law is as to 'that.' If he hoped thus to hinder the issue of the Indulgence he was disappointed, for Ashley and Clifford reported that the Act 25 Hen. 8, 'the Great Law declaring the King Head of 'the Church,' 'at this day subsists,' and that by it the King could 'declare heresies, excommunicate, burn.' So much for constitutional procedure. After that the Committee went forward with the Declaration, apparently satisfied that their policy had the sanction of the law.[1]

As England's Declaration of War had been accompanied by lies and piracy, that of France, which followed it on April 6, was a masterpiece of insolence.[2] It did not even deign to allege a pretext for hostilities, save only 'the ill-satisfaction 'of His Majesty at the conduct pursued for some time past 'by the United Provinces.' Louis had prepared his ground well. The keystone of his policy, the alliance with England, received its final form on February 12. The month of January had been employed in making an offensive alliance with the Electors of Cologne and Münster, in order that the French armies might make use of their Rhine territories on the way to the Dutch eastern frontier. Following the same plan that had proved so successful at Dover, Louis undertook to defray the cost of 18,000 men to be raised by the Elector

[1] P.R.O., Foreign Entry Book, 177.

[2] De Groot left Paris at the end of March, having been prevented by illness from leaving earlier, as his official mission ended in January. Secretary Rompf remained in Paris to conduct what business he could.

of Cologne as auxiliary troops to be employed against Holland. These subsidiary treaties were of such importance that Louvois himself journeyed secretly to Brühl and Ossendorf, there to meet with the Electors of Cologne and Münster and dictate treaties according to his own wishes. The drunken orgies in which the two prelates indulged, the 'irrésolution con-'tinuelle et avarice sordide' of the Bishop of Strasburg (the Electors' chief councillor) rendered the task distasteful in the extreme, but Louvois wrote on January 4 that he had been able so to adjust matters that 'the King will find things as 'easy here as though he were going to attack the Spaniards 'on the side of Flanders.' [1]

Louvois, indeed, never lost sight of the old objective which the Triple Alliance had placed temporarily out of his reach. Louis, when he entered on the war of 1672, had allowed his resentment at De Witt's interference to develop into a passion of hatred against the Republic, to be satisfied only with their complete destruction. Beyond that, for the moment, he hardly cared to look. Louvois was equally prepared to humiliate and, if possible, annihilate the Dutch, simply as 'the true means of arriving at the conquest of the 'Spanish Netherlands.' [2]

It was true that Louis had not been able to prevent the defensive alliance between Spain and the United Provinces from being concluded on December 17, 1671. But he was confident that, with the whole of the Rhine valley open to him, his progress would be so swift and successful that Spain could do him no harm. The help promised by the bankrupt Spanish Empire to her old Republican foe in this extremity could indeed hardly be regarded with much awe. 'Les levées qui 'se font ici font pitié,' wrote Villars, the French Ambassador, to his master in February from Madrid.[3]

[1] Rousset, *Vie de Louvois*, i. p. 34. For the treaties of Brühl and Ossendorf, see Mignet, iii. p. 704–7.

[2] Rousset, *ibid.* p. 325.

[3] Meerman reminded De Witt that the Dutch troops already in Spanish service amounted to more than the promised auxiliaries: Meerman to De Witt, March 25, 1672.

In the north, too, Brandenburg stirred to the help of the Republic. The Elector of Brandenburg, Frederick William, was himself the most remarkable statesman in Germany, and his growing territories in the north and east were being consolidated and organised into a powerful State. The Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 added East Pomerania and the great central bishoprics of Magdeburg, Halberstadt and Minden to Brandenburg. In 1657 he had acquired East Prussia from the King of Poland; and in 1666 he pushed westwards to the Rhine itself. A treaty with the Duke of Neuburg secured him the Duchy of Cleves, which lay on either side of the Rhine as it entered the territory of the Dutch Republic, and the county of Mark, a little to the east of the river. This treaty ended a situation which had lasted without a settlement since the death of the last Duke of Cleves in 1609. Henri IV had attempted to impose a settlement on Brandenburg and Neuburg, the two rival claimants to the Cleves territories, but his death cut short the negotiations. The important lands of the lower Rhine, the eastern gateways to the United Provinces, remained without legal overlords throughout the Thirty Years' War, and even the Peace of Westphalia failed to assign them to new rulers. Brandenburg exercised some authority over Cleves, but the Duchy in reality was subject to the States-General rather than to the Elector.

The Dutch, during the turmoil of the first period of the Thirty Years' War, had placed garrisons in the six chief towns of Cleves—Wesel, Burik, Emmerik, Rees, Orsooi and Rijnberk. Since 1626 these troops had remained there, nor had any efforts on the Elector's part sufficed to make them withdraw. The presence of Dutch troops in territories which he claimed as his own was a continual annoyance, for the independent-minded Estates of Cleves were apt to resist the Elector's attempts at taxation, knowing that he could not attack them without offending the Dutch. But to quarrel with Holland was the one act above all others which the Elector

was determined to avoid. Many motives—not ignoble—kept him firm in an inclination towards, if not an active friendship with, the States-General.

To begin with, Brandenburg and the Republic were co-religionists—the two great Protestant powers of northern Europe—no light bond in days when Protestantism had to maintain itself in Germany against the forces of the counter-Reformation. Then Frederick William was drawn by many personal ties to the Republic. He had passed his youth in Holland, partly at the university of Leiden, where his aunt, the exiled Queen of Bohemia, lived with her numerous and uproarious offspring ; partly with Frederick Henry, Prince of Orange, at the Hague, or in quarters on the frontiers, assisting him in his wars and sieges. In 1646 he married the daughter of Orange, the Princess Louise Henrietta, one of those women whose ' sweet influences ' make themselves felt through all the more commonplace and ambitious politics of the courts in which they live—influences of peace, kindness and constructive statesmanship. Through her counsel the Elector proceeded to colonise Brandenburg—laid waste by the armies of the Thirty Years' War—with Dutch peasantry. She softened his wrath towards the Estates of Cleves, and helped to prevent dangerous crises in these nervous frontier lands.

As one of the guardians of the young William III, the Elector was bound to live on polite terms with those who had the strongest control over the boy's destiny—the States of Holland. There are indications that William felt real esteem for his German uncle. His visit to Cleves in 1661, when he and the Elector killed a boar together, was not soon forgotten. Long years afterwards he spoke with deep feeling to the Brandenburg Ambassador of the Elector ' who has loved me ' from the cradle like a father, whom I honour as a son.'

But apart from personal considerations, the Elector's dislike and fear of Louis XIV led him consistently to support the Republic whenever a crisis arose, even when his immediate

interest seemed to counsel otherwise. In 1665, when England and the Republic were at grips on the sea, the Elector was invited by the Bishop of Münster to join him in an invasion of the Dutch eastern frontiers. The tempting prize was to be the full sovereignty of the towns in Cleves and the expulsion of the Dutch garrisons. Not only did the Elector refuse to join forces with the Bishop, but when he saw France preparing to send troops into the Rhinelands on the pretext of defending her allies, the Dutch, he at once set himself to quench an enterprise so dangerous to the peace of Germany. Entering Cleves with an army, he forced the Bishop to withdraw from Overijssel and, on February 16, 1666, concluded a defensive alliance with the States-General, by which the Bishop was forced to give up his conquests, and the Elector obtained subsidies from the Republic for the maintenance of a standing army. In April followed his treaty with the Duke of Neuburg, finally ratifying his claims on Cleves.

France had thereby received a definite check. The Elector, by his prompt action, had interrupted her in the rôle she desired to play as arbitress of affairs on the Rhine. When the time came for the attack on the Republic she had first to reckon with the Elector as the ally of the States-General.

In order to reach the Dutch frontiers by way of the Rhine, the French troops would have to pass through Cleves, and the leave of the Elector be obtained, or his opposition disregarded. To prevent the conclusion of a new treaty of defence between Brandenburg and the States, Louis knew he must speak the Elector fair. In the early spring of 1672 he offered to restore the Cleves towns in full sovereignty, after the defeat of the Dutch. Backed by such overwhelming military force as the King of France possessed, the offer was of a more alluring nature than that made by the vagabond Bishop in 1665. The Dutch would almost certainly be beaten in the struggle. Was it worth while to risk the enmity of Louis by supporting them?

Frederick William was not mean-spirited. He thought

of himself now, not as the leader of Protestant Germany against the pretensions of the Hapsburgs, but as the protector of the integrity of Germany as a whole against the danger of French aggressions. So thinking, he gave cold answers to the French envoy, concluded an alliance with the States-General on April 18, and despatched Anhalt to Vienna to work on the fears of the Emperor.

The Elector's aim was to form a German League headed by the Emperor, which should force France either to accept peace by armed mediation or, at least, to withdraw from all territories belonging to members of the League (in this case Cleves) through which the French armies were marching to the Republic.

In spite of all Louis's protestations, he succeeded. The decision of Spain to support the Republic had stiffened the hostility of the Empire towards France, and slowly the lumbering diplomacy of the Imperial Court began to take action against the unscrupulous power whose dealings with Cologne and Münster had made the Rhine into a French corridor.

On June 23 a treaty was signed at Berlin between the Elector and the Emperor, the Emperor promising to draw into it all princes who owed him allegiance, while Brandenburg answered for Denmark, Brunswick and Hesse-Cassel.

In vain Louis, in the height of his conquests in the Republic, wrote from Arnhem that he would respect such German towns 'of which he had been obliged to take possession because 'they had Dutch garrisons.' The garrisons which he had left in Tongeren and Maaseyck in the Spanish Netherlands should be regarded, he said, as safeguarding rather than threatening the Empire. To Brandenburg he wrote more haughtily concerning the town of Cleves, which he had occupied in his march: 'It cannot be doubted that I possess them by a 'legitimate title, since if the Dutch had one, I have entered 'them in their place, and I had a right to seize them from 'the Elector himself if he had made them act against me.'

Such arguments were merely provocative when his armies

bestrode the Netherlands from Charleroi to Utrecht. In the terror of his military power lay the real motive for opposing him.

On July 25 the Empire carried its obligations yet further by a treaty at the Hague with the States, promising the speedy approach of the joint forces of the Elector and Emperor to the frontiers of the Republic, 'there to unite with an army 'of the States of 20,000 men and defend the United Provinces.'

This promise, coming at the moment when the Republic was almost broken to pieces under the onslaught of France, was of value in restoring some hope and confidence, if it did not lead to any immediate military results. Its political consequences, however, were of incalculable importance. Spain—Germany—Vienna—already the European resistance was forming itself against the overshadowing tyranny. The coalition of central European Powers with Holland was to be the condition of the next forty years of diplomacy and warfare.

CHAPTER VI

Measures of Defence, February–May 1672

Since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 had given rest to a shattered Europe after thirty years of war, the Dutch Republic had—with one short and in itself insignificant interruption—enjoyed peace with all her Continental neighbours. The interruption had been the sudden inroad made into her eastern frontier provinces—Drente, Groningen and Overijssel—by the foolish *condottiere* prelate, von Galen, Bishop of Münster, in 1665.[1] The fighting strength of this adventurer's forces was negligible; he came to pillage rather than to conquer, but circumstances made the incident memorable. In the first place, von Galen was in receipt of English subsidies and his attack was an inconvenient distraction from the great ocean-struggle that was being fought out (with De Witt himself present on board De Ruyter's flagship) between England and the Republic in the North Sea. The Dutch land forces had been drastically reduced after the death of William II in 1650; the office of Captain-General was in abeyance, no field-marshals had been appointed. The States, under De Witt's indefatigable genius, relied on their diplomacy to procure them allies and friends all over Europe. Since their defensive alliance with France in 1662 they had been lulled into a still more fatal security. When von Galen began to ravage the east, they turned to France to rid them of a nuisance which might become a danger. Happily for them, it suited Louis XIV at that date to abide by his promises. With his

[1] See above, p. 32, Rousset, *Vie de Louvois*, vol. i.; Depping, *Munsterschen en Keulschen Oorlog*.

eyes fixed on the Spanish Netherlands—to be his, without fail, on the approaching death of Philip IV—he could not afford to alienate a Government whose sea-power was so formidable. At the same time he had no wish to join actively in the sea war against England. He could fulfil his obligations well enough by despatching 6,000 of the best household troops under Marquis de Pradel to drive back the bishop from the Dutch frontiers.

Pradel's army occupied the eastern territories of the Republic and parts of the Duchy of Cleves from November 1665 until June 1666. The bishop's troops—if they deserved the name—were dispersed at the first encounter with the experienced and disciplined French regiments. The French then proceeded to winter in the country, and earned an infamous reputation in every town and village where they were quartered by their violence, debauchery and, worst of all, their bullying religious fanaticism. The musketeers of France themselves were not ashamed to beat the burghers of Rees with their swords because they would not salute the Host as it was being carried through the streets. Louvois had the sense sharply to rebuke such an excess ; though the time was coming when the Mass would be restored by force in the cities of the Republic.

If anything could have impressed the Dutch with a sense of the insecurity of their military policy, it should have been that experience of six months' entertainment of French troops inside their own borders. The failure of De Witt's Government to provide adequately during the next seven years against frontier attacks is the gravest accusation which can be brought against it.

The Dutch army had won an honourable name for itself during the eighty years' war with Spain. The creation and maintenance of an effective field army had been the chief interest and labour of the two sons of William the Silent, Maurice and Frederick Henry. In organisation and discipline it differed little from the other armies of the time, suffering like them from the pernicious system of the captain being

the paymaster of his company, which gave rise to the time-honoured abuse of false-musters and many another besides. The peculiarities of the Dutch military system lay in the lack of unity in the control, payment and command of the army. Early in the seventeenth century the States-General had decided that each province should be responsible for the payment of a certain proportion of the army of the whole Republic. Formerly the provinces had paid their quotas into a general fund administered by the Council of State. It was found that Gelderland, Utrecht and Overijssel never paid, and Holland and Zeeland were obliged to supply the deficiency. But, after the new method of payment was introduced, the results were much worse, from the point of view of the army. Troops who were raised, equipped and paid by one province were inevitably regarded as provincial rather than 'Union' troops. They took an oath of allegiance to their provincial paymasters, as well as to the States-General, and were quartered on the territory of their respective provinces.[1] It may easily be imagined what difficulties this system might raise in time of war. Even so, Holland never bore less than 58 per cent. of the total cost of the army. As the Republic entered more and more strenuously into the Thirty Years' War, under constant pressure from Richelieu and Frederick Henry, the burden became severe indeed, and was resented deeply by the pacific oligarchy, who cared more for the extension of overseas trade than for the capture of another fortress on the frontiers of the Spanish Netherlands. Hence came Holland's fierce resistance to the warlike temper of William II in 1650 and her threat to disband the troops which she herself had raised and paid unless the whole army were reduced.

The command of the army was entrusted, in the days of Frederick Henry, to the Captain-General, who was appointed by the States-General of the United Provinces. Frederick Henry, the first Captain-General (his brother Maurice had all the powers but not the name), was also Prince of Orange and

[1] See p. 14 above.

Stadtholder of five provinces. As Stadtholder he appointed all the army officers, from the captains downwards, from lists presented by the States of the various provinces. The higher officers were appointed by the States-General. His command over the army in the field was restricted by the presence of civilian Deputies from the States-General, who accompanied the army on every campaign, and whose consent must be obtained on all important points.

In 1672 the powers of these Deputies were greater than ever before.[1] From them, not from the Captain-General, the officers took their orders ; the Deputies were bound to listen to the Prince's advice, but all initiative came from them, and the Prince was their servant. They in their turn were bound to act on the orders of the States-General. It must be remembered that they were not men of military training, tradition, or family, but statesmen transferred from the council-board to the camp. The president was a Hollander, Hieronymus van Beverningk, one of the ablest diplomats the Republic possessed. His talents and character had gained him a European reputation. 'The most practised and the 'ablest ambassador of any I have ever met in the course 'of my employments' is Temple's tribute. Even D'Estrades acknowledged that he could not be bought. His conduct as Deputy in the Field in 1672, though not brilliant from a military point of view, was conscientious and painstaking.[2] His six fellow-deputies, whose personalities are scarcely distinguishable one from another, represented the provinces of Gelderland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Friesland, Overijssel and Groningen.

The quality of nationalism—by which a modern army

[1] Their 'Instruction' was delivered to them on April 18, and empowered them 'to resolve and execute everything . . . for the accomplishment of our 'salutary aim, and to cause to move, advance and act the aforesaid army in whole 'or in part for its greatest service, protection, well-being, and safety, as they 'shall judge to be best for the State, according to opportunity and the require-'ments of circumstances.'

[2] See Schotel, *Iets over H. van Beverningk en Bruno van der Dussen*, 1847.

stands or falls—was no more conspicuous in the Dutch army than in any of the other cosmopolitan hordes which fought in the Thirty Years' War. The States-General contracted with German, Danish and French Governments—or with individual nobles or officers—to provide regiments for their service, to such an extent that under Frederick Henry one-third of the Dutch army consisted of foreign troops, and that third was considered the most efficient. Chief among the foreigners stood the famous English regiments, which had begun their career in the States' service before the reign of Elizabeth came to an end. Ever since Captain Morgan led a band of 300 English volunteers 'among whom were upwards 'of 100 gentlemen of property' to take part in the defence of Flushing against the Spaniards in 1572, there had been a close military connection between England and the States. Sir Francis Vere began his twenty years of command over the English troops in 1589, and was succeeded by his brother Sir Horace in 1608. In 1624 the States raised four additional English regiments of foot, so that in 1626 the British troops in Dutch service—including three Scottish foot regiments—numbered just under 20,000 men.

In the general reduction of troops which took place in the Republic after 1650, the English veterans were reduced to one regiment, which, being enthusiastically royalist, remained in Holland during the Commonwealth and Protectorate. Its colonel, a certain John Cromwell, even obtained leave from Charles II in exile to change his name to Williams.

The Restoration, and the second Dutch war which followed it, brought about the first break in this long tradition of service. 'The Holland Regiment' returned to England in the spring of 1665, there to be enrolled as the fourth of the British line, but popularly known still as the 'Holland 'Regiment' and later as 'the Buffs.'

Thus it came about that there were no English regiments in Dutch service during the war of 1672. Only the three Scottish regiments—reduced by economy to two—remained,

but they had long lost their original nationality, as vacancies had been filled up from almost every nation in Europe. There were besides several English captains commanding miscellaneous companies, but these were mere adventurers and soldiers of fortune. It remained for William III to re-instate the English regiments after the peace of Westminster in 1674, and to purge the Scottish of the intruding foreign elements.[1]

As has been pointed out in a former chapter, De Witt had been endeavouring, since the autumn of 1670, to improve the land and sea defences of the Republic, and had been frustrated, first by Amsterdam and then by one after another of the other provinces of the Union.[2] Even after the intervention of the Prince of Orange had obtained the consent of Zeeland in March 1671, the question of financial 'ways and means,' whereby the paper resolutions might be translated into men and ships, took up so much time that it seemed as though De Witt and the States of Holland would lose sight of the need for troops in their anxiety to produce new and perfect schemes for raising money.[3] De Witt loved to follow out the intricacies of financial problems, and the autumn of 1671 had begun before the budget obtained the consent of all the towns of Holland.[4]

The Dutch delays were all the more astonishing, since the French army was gathered 30,000 strong in and around Dunkirk, where Louis reviewed it in April 1671. De Witt watched it with anxiety. Some troops were despatched to the Flemish frontiers in May 'on account of the neighbourhood of 'so considerable an army.'[5] But even then De Witt was doubtful whether the Dunkirk troops were destined for the Republic. From England came rumours that 'the French 'army will be shipped over to England to help to bring the 'King to an absolute monarchical authority and to tread under-'foot all privileges of the people or parliament and possibly to 'introduce the Romish religion by the sword.'[6] Here, almost

[1] See *Regimental Histories.*
[2] See chap. iii. above.
[3] Japikse, *Johan De Witt*, p. 312, ed. 1928.
[4] Wicquefort, iv. pp. 292–8.
[5] De Witt to De Groot, May 8, 1671.
[6] *Ibid.*

word for word, were the principles of the 'grand design' as they were expressed in the Treaty of Dover. It was a strange irony that De Witt should have been so fully informed about a scheme which had by this time been virtually abandoned, while he was so much in the dark about those measures which struck at the very life of the Republic.

The Dutch Republic in December 1671 was still surveying with dismay its unprepared and leaderless state. As one member of the States of Holland said, 'it was all very well to 'speak of raising money, but money alone cannot fight; one 'must also consider what troops, what chiefs, what artillery 'and what provisions are to be made use of.'[1] On December 24 the Council of State reported on the condition of the frontiers, frontier towns and garrisons, and complained of a 'lack of cannon and munitions.' The efforts of the Council of State to bring the States-General to a sense of the need for further armaments had failed in October 1671. After Louis left Flanders for Paris, the resolution to raise 35,000 new infantry and cavalry was left on record, but was not translated into fact.[2] The question of the appointment of the Prince of Orange had occupied the time of all the provinces from October onwards to such an extent that no progress had been made with land armaments.[3] De Witt himself realised the danger of such delay, but would not give the lead towards a solution, by himself proposing William's advancement, until his hand was forced by Holland herself. In the middle of December William was despatched, with other members of the Council of State, to the eastern frontiers to survey and report on the state of the fortifications on the Rijn and Ijssel.[4] William himself mentioned this expedition in a letter to his English friend, the Earl of Ossory.[5]

[1] Vivien and Hop, *Notulen gehouden ter Staten-Vergadering van Holland*, 1671–1675, ed. Dr. N. Japikse, Amsterdam, 1903.

[2] Basnage, ii. p. 170.

[3] The fleet had gone to sea in June 1671, reinforced with thirty-six new ships of war. Wagenaar, xiv. pp. 441–2.

[4] Wicquefort, iv. p. 305. Van der Goes, *Briefwisseling*, ii. p. 324. He is here described as 'premier' of the expedition.

[5] B.M. Add MSS. 21,492, 1.

'The States have thought good for me to go and visit the 'fortifications on the Rheyn and the Yssel, to see if they are 'in a good state of defence . . . and I think I shall not be 'more than a fortnight on this journey.' He returned in the third week of January, and was present at a meeting of the Council on the 19th.[1]

The report of the Commission was not cheerful, and the Government knew that time was against it in the task of reorganisation which was before it. Diplomatic relations with France ceased officially in January. England proved daily more unreasonable over the flag question, and in spite of the elevation of the Prince of Orange to a temporary Captain-Generalship in February, the hopes of her support, in case the Republic were attacked, were slender. From European allies little practical help could be expected for several months to come. The whole fabric of alliances by which De Witt had hoped to maintain the Republic in a state of perpetual non-combatancy, lay tragically shattered. In vigorous measures of defence, undertaken immediately, lay the only hope, and in the early weeks of January 1672 the Governors of the Dutch Republic faced a situation more terrible than any which had come upon them since the days of William the Silent and Philip II.

For their coasts and islands they feared least. The fleet was at sea, well equipped and commanded by the man in whom both Government and people could place perfect trust—Michel Adriaanszoon De Ruyter. The eastern and southern frontiers—the lands of the great rivers—would have to bear the onslaught of France, and they were not in a state to resist such an army as Louis had at his command. The Rhine, which splits into three great branches—Waal, Rijn and Ijssel—soon after entering the territory of the Republic, was the natural frontier of the States, and on them were situated a large number of fortresses and fortified towns. Six of these lay outside the Republic, in the Duchy of Cleves, defended

[1] Resolutien, Raad van State 93, Rijks Archief, The Hague.

by Dutch garrisons, though in the territory of the Elector of Brandenburg.[1] Should Louis approach by way of Cologne and the Rhine valley, the towns of Rees, Emmerick, Burik, Wezel, Orsooi and Rijnberk might, if stoutly defended, delay his advance for a considerable time.

Following the Rhine down into the borders of the Republic, the next post was Schenkenschans, a strong fortress on a narrow spit of land, in the angle where the Rhine and Waal separated, the Rijn flowing north to Arnhem, the Waal westward, past Nijmegen. The large 'island' of flat, fertile country enclosed by the Waal on the south and Rijn on north and east is called the Betuwe, and the distance across it from Nijmegen to Arnhem is about fifteen kilometres. Just before reaching Arnhem the Rijn splits again, this time sending a branch winding northward to the Zuyder Zee, through a flat rural plain, the low hills of Gelderland flanking it on the west. This branch is the Ijssel, and on the defence of the Ijssel the Government decided to concentrate most of its energy. The towns along it were all supposed to be fortified, and lay for the most part on the east bank. Their order from south to north was Doesburg, Zutfen, Deventer, Hattem, Zwolle and Kampen.

On the Maas (Meuse) from Grave to Bergen op Zoom lay another set of fortresses defending the province of North Brabant and the southern frontiers of Holland. Chief of them were Grave and 's Hertogenbosch, the former won from the Spaniards by Prince Maurice, the latter by Frederick Henry in 1629.[2]

The defence of all these cities and rivers, besides the provision of an effective field army, was the task of the Republic in the winter and early spring of 1672. Such, however, was the state of the fortifications and artillery in most of them, and so hopeless the task of garrisoning them efficiently in so short a time, that it would have been wiser to have

[1] See above, p. 112. [2] See Map of the Campaigns.

evacuated the more outlying positions, so as to concentrate all possible man-power (the most serious defect of all) on the Ijssel line, the Rijn between Arnhem and Schenkenschans, and, last but not least important, on Holland's own line of home defence, the river Vecht from Muiden on the Zuyder Zee to Utrecht on the Rhine.[1] The attempted defence of all these places proved disastrous, and did not fulfil the hope of the Government, that thereby sufficient time would be gained to organise an effective army and even procure help from allied States.

On April 15 the States of Holland held a committee on the Security of the Land, in which they reviewed the condition of the land forces up to that date.[2] The result of the recruitings of 1671 had been that the army, at the end of that year, numbered on paper 569 infantry companies and 89 cavalry—a total of about 45,000 men. In February 1672 about 11,000 men had been added,[3] but of these more than 9,000 had been sent, according to treaty obligations, to the Spanish Netherlands.[4] Eighteen regiments (about 12,000 men) were destined for a field army, leaving 34,000 available for garrisons. Now the States reckoned that there were not less than ninety-six towns and forts which had to be defended. Even if some outlying places like Aardenburg in Flanders, or Burik on the Rhine, were demolished, and other small places left ungarrisoned, there would still remain at least seventy. It will be noticed that the average per garrison, without demolitions, is about 350 men. To these it was hoped to add, by new levies, about 14,000 men. But troops are not raised and equipped all in a moment, and by the middle of May, when Louis was already advancing towards Maastricht, the total number of troops, including the garrisons of all the scattered towns on Rhine, Meuse and Ijssel, and in Groningen and Overijssel,

[1] See *De Nieuwe Spectator*, for 1848–1849, articles entitled, '*Krijgskundige Beschouwingen over den oorlog van* 1672–1678.' Also Van Sypestein en De Bordes, *De Verdediging van Nederland in* 1672 *en* 1673, part i. pp. 35–49.

[2] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, p. 51.

[3] According to van Sypestein en De Bordes, 14,000.

[4] Vivien en Hop, p. 51. The five infantry regiments in the Spanish Netherlands were ordered back on May 29, with the 2,000 Spanish Cavalry and one Spanish infantry regiment. The infantry arrived at Arnhem on June 9. Vivien en Hop, pp. 89 and 95.

numbered a bare 47,000 men. The tiny field-army which was to hold forty miles of the Ijssel front numbered on May 18, 9,200 foot and 4,800 horse, exclusive of the men in garrison in Doesburg, Deventer and Zutfen. The total number of troops on the Ijssel on June 8 was reckoned at 22,000.

In addition to the regular army, it was resolved on April 1 to raise 10,000 'waardgelders,' extra militiamen to be trained by the officers of the town militia in addition to the ordinary companies of burghers which each town possessed. Some of these—rather more than 2,000—were sent to the Ijssel in the first week of June. Holland also resolved to raise 14,000 for her own defence, and to exercise her peasants in the use of muskets. Peasants were also recruited in large numbers to dig the Ijssel entrenchments, and the distracted generals even begged that they might be sent as troops.[1]

The States of Holland were confident that 'our people 'being trained, will be as good as any others,' and that 'if 'there is courage, the country cannot be conquered even by '400,000 men.'[2] Unfortunately courage was lacking where it was most needed—in the garrisons of the frontier towns, in the town governments and among the citizens, in the military governors, colonels and captains. When the struggle began, the old spirit of fierce resistance to the foreigner, which had inspired the towns of Holland in the days of Philip II, was discernible only in one or two outlying cities of the Republic—Aardenberg in Flanders, and the city of Groningen.[3] In the rest, for the most part, panic and cowardice possessed soldiers and people.

Of the fortresses, the most effectively armed and defended in the spring of 1672 was the distant and isolated city of Maastricht. It lay far up the Meuse, a solitary outpost, more valuable for overawing the Spanish Netherlands than for

[1] Van Sypestein en de Bordes, part i. pp. 20 and 102: Vivien en Hop., pp. 52–4.
[2] Vivien en Hop., *Notulen*.
[3] Aardenberg was besieged by a French detachment on June 27 and manfully defended by the citizens, who beat off the French with loss. Groningen was besieged for a month by the Cologne and Münster troops, but held out successfully.

defending the Republic. Had Louis been of a mind to besiege it and advance by way of the Meuse, the States would have been justified in giving it a large garrison. But from the end of April onwards it became almost certain that Louis would proceed by way of the Rhine and ignore Maastricht for the present.[1] Yet the States-General continued to pour troops into Maastricht as though it alone of all the cities of the Netherlands were in danger of attack. The Deputies on the Ijssel wrote bitterly on May 1: 'We think the Rhijngrave '(the Governor of Maastricht) would not be displeased if all 'the troops in the country came and camped before his gates; 'but we think 5,597 effective soldiers, with their officers, is 'a sufficient amount to defend a city. When the Prince of 'Orange attacked it [in 1632] there were not nearly so many 'inside, yet it was well defended. If Wezel and Rijnberk are 'to be garrisoned in proportion we might as well abandon the 'Ijssel.'[2] In spite of this protest, the garrison of Maastricht was increased to 8,400, about twice as many as were to be found in all the six towns in Cleves. In any case, as Van Beverningk pointed out to the States of Holland, the King of France's army was so large that Maastricht alone, however well defended, could never hold back the whole of it. It would push on into the heart of the country, and fall on the weak fortresses of the lower Meuse, 's Hertogenbosch and Heusden, and so over the rivers into Utrecht.[3] De Witt, though by the middle of May he thought Maastricht would be left alone,[4] did not interfere with its garrisoning. The mistake was never retrieved, and the garrison remained there while the French occupied all the surrounding towns.

The six towns of Cleves lying along the Rhine had finally to bear the brunt of Louis's attack, and their resources were

[1] Letter of Secretary Rumpf from Paris, April 29, in Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part i. p. 44 n.

[2] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part i. p. 26.

[3] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, p. 69.

[4] See his letter to the Prince of Orange, *Brieven*, iv. 332, in which it is clear he does not yet know whether Louis will choose the Rhine route and fall on the Ijssel, or march across Brabant to Breda and 's Hertogenbosch.

of the poorest. On May 3, 1672, the Deputies sent a list of their garrisons to the Government.[1] Orsooi had 800 men within its walls; Rijnberk, its neighbour fortress, 1,100. The walls of these two towns were in fairly good repair, having been improved since February, after Colonel Bampfield, who was second in command at Rijnberk, complained in a letter to the States of Holland on February 13, that it lacked ammunition and could only be maintained 'by a miracle' if besieged.[2]

The next pair of fortresses, Burik and Wezel, were in a ruinous condition. The moats were dry or blocked up, the walls fallen down, the cannon for the most part useless. Burik had 300, and Wezel, a far larger post, 1,350 men. Rees, still further down the Rhine, had turned its fortifications into pleasure grounds, and Emmerik, since the destruction of the 'Oranjefort' in 1665, was no longer in a state to offer resistance. Yet the Dutch Government hoped that these posts would be sufficient to delay the advance of the French until the 'Ijssel 'line' could be put into a good state of defence. De Witt on June 4, at the very moment when the 'six towns' were giving themselves up to Condé and Turenne, wrote to van Beverningk: 'We must thank God that He has inspired the 'King of France to wait eight days at Charleroi and three weeks 'round Maastricht, and we hope that the siege of Wezel will 'again cause him to delay; by all of which we have an 'opportunity of strengthening considerably our army on the 'Ijssel.'

Schenkenschans, on its tadpole-shaped promontory between Waal and Rhine, was almost an island, and was considered impregnable.[3] It was in good repair, well provisioned and garrisoned, but the drought in May and June had reduced

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, *op. cit.*, Bijlage, i. pp. 88 and 35.

[2] Vivien and Hop, *Notulen*, February 13, 1672. Bampfield was an English Royalist, who had formerly been engaged in a good deal of intrigue, and finally took service in the Dutch Army in 1669. In 1672 he was forward with advice as to the best method of defence, but was imprisoned in November for deserting his post.

[3] It had been captured by the Spaniards in 1635, and retaken by Frederick Henry in 1636, after a nine months' siege.

its strength by almost drying up the Rhine and the water in the ditches. Further down the Waal, on the left (southern) bank, stood Nijmegen, on its sudden wall of cliff, lifted in majestic solitude high above the great plain. On the north its own cliff fell steeply to the mighty 'Waalstroom'; on the south, where the ground fell gently to the plain, it was defended by formidable walls and towers. But as late as the first week in June it had 'no cannon of importance, no powder, no matches, 'no chief officer.'[1] The Waal at Nijmegen is wider than the Thames at London, and in 1672 had no bridge. Opposite on the northern shore lay a small fort called Knodsenburg containing eight cannon and a garrison of 300 men. The passage of the Waal was thus entirely commanded from both banks, and no enemy could proceed into Holland by way of the Waal without passing under the guns of Nijmegen and Knodsenburg.

The Ijssel fortresses, which were expected to hold up Louis's advance after he had passed the Rhine towns, were reinforced with men, provisions and artillery during the early spring of 1672, but in many of them the walls, ditches and bridges were left in an almost ruinous condition. Kampen, at the mouth of the river, was a port as well as a fortress, and could, in case of necessity, be a valuable jumping-off place whence troops and artillery could be shipped off in large numbers and transported to Amsterdam or Muiden for the defence of Holland. Its defences were considered sufficient, as were also those of Doesburg, at the southern end of the Ijssel, and Zutfen, then considered the strongest town in the Netherlands. Deventer was provided with a large garrison of 4,000 men, but her bridges and walls were in a lamentable condition. Zwolle, which lay on the Zwarte Water two miles east of the Ijssel, could have been made into a formidable position if the line of small forts which linked her walls with the Ijssel had been kept in repair.

A vivid little picture has been preserved for us of the

[1] Van Beverningk to De Witt, June 7, 1672: *Brieven aan De Witt*, ii.

condition of town and country along the Ijssel and the northern banks of the Rhine in this eventful spring. It is the diary of a tour made by a small company of Hollanders —members of the governing class—'for the visitation of the 'defence works on the Ijssel and the towns lying along that 'river.'[1] One of the company was Pieter de la Court, the joint author, with De Witt, of 'The Interest of Holland,' a famous pamphlet, half military, half political, which had appeared in 1669, and which, among other matters, had set forth a great scheme for securing the safety of the provinces of Holland and Utrecht by a great fortified canal, which should stretch from Muiden on the Zuyder Zee to Vreeswijk on the Rhine.[2] The writer of the diary remains anonymous, but he was a man with the true Dutch delight in detail and a passion for observation.

The travellers left the Hague on April 20, and proceeded to Amersfoort by way of Leiden and Woerden. On the way they passed 'many peasants going to the villages with 'their weapons to be mustered.' Otherwise the quiet landscapes they passed through showed little sign of disturbance. As they made their way along the edge of the Zuyder Zee towards Kampen, they remarked 'the fatness and number of 'the horned cattle,' and the peasants chopping wood into small blocks 'to be sold in Holland.' The little towns of Harderwijk and Elburg were flourishing in the fishing trade and the market business of the countryside, and of the highlands of the Veluwe where the sheep pastured. The 'wide and 'excellently built streets and squares' of Kampen, the 'clothing, 'household management, etc.,' of its citizens, attracted the travellers' notice as much as the condition of the fortifications. These latter varied in each town according to the disposition and energy of the citizens. Elburg had hastily repaired its walls, cleared its moats and even placed a few cannon on the outworks, 'so that nothing was lacking but the necessary

[1] Published in Historisch Genootschap te Utrecht *Kronijk*, 1861, pp. 233–65.

[2] The pamphlet passed through many editions and was translated into English. It was chiefly a declaration of De Witt's political faith and ideals.

'ammunition and a good supply of soldiers.' At Kampen the travellers were too much concerned with searching for the remains of a Roman battering-ram to pay much attention to its modern defences. At Zwolle they found 'a courageous 'and high-spirited population,' who were confident they had nothing to fear. At Deventer the burghers were still working at the repair of the walls which had simply fallen to pieces 'in 'the long years of peace.' They were 'full of courage and well-'armed,' spoke boldly of the future, and lived in friendliness with the garrison, who kept the town 'very lively.' Zutfen was less satisfactory. The Hollanders were not allowed to see the fortifications, because the repairs were yet so incomplete. On the road between Zutfen and Doesburg they met 'the body-guard of Field-Marshal Wirtz coming 'from Maastricht under orders for Zutfen'—their arms piled on the baggage wagons along with the women, children and invalids. Along this road also were coming and going many coaches 'with people of some consequence,' who had been to visit the Prince of Orange in his house at Dieren near Doesburg.[1] Whether the Prince appreciated their visits at a time of such anxiety, when every moment of day and night was occupied, is not recorded. It would seem, however, that visitors were admitted to the 'Huis te Dieren' when the Prince was not there. The diarist and his friends approached it with much curiosity and were disappointed. William's hunting-lodge was 'an old and not well-preserved house'—its moats dry and overgrown, the window-bars of the outhouses fallen to ruin; it had no modern attractions. Middachten, a little further along the 'fine, broad, lordly road' to Arnhem, appeared to them more like a 'princely palace' as it stood in all its modern dignity at the end of the long beech avenue. But the vestibule at Dieren was ornamented with deer heads and antlers—the triumphs of many a chase. Outside, towards the hills, lay the wood, stretching away over the high ground,

[1] The Prince was by this time with the field army on the Ijssel front. See below, p. 136.

thick with splendid trees. 'And although in 1670 I saw 'several enclosed chases in England and France, yet none of 'these was so fine for timber and so full of pleasing variety as 'this wood and chase.'

Having satisfied their curiosity about Dieren, the travellers visited Doesburg, which they pronounced 'the strongest of 'all towns.' It was full of soldiers; the gardens and houses in the suburbs had been destroyed so that they could not afford cover to an enemy; the supply of artillery was sufficient, and had already been placed in the batteries.

Arnhem, the capital of Gelderland, was in very poor condition. It lay immediately on the river Rhine, and the citizens were still busy endeavouring to repair the walls on the other three sides. The travellers were more interested in its flourishing river traffic, in the bridge of boats connecting it with the Betuwe, and in the fact that 'here live as 'many nobles and considerable families as anywhere in Gelder-'land.' The garrison consisted of two infantry regiments and a very few companies of cavalry.

The fortresses defending North Brabant were the worst of all. The magistrates of 's Hertogenbosch were obliged to send a petition to the Hague to plead for more defences. The Commission of Deputies who were sent to make a survey, reported on May 29 that 'it was appalling to find so important 'a town as this so unprovided in the present conjuncture of 'times and affairs.' [1] Crèvecœur, Engelen, Heusden, Breda and Bergen-op-Zoom, were all in a similar condition; Grave, further up the Meuse, had alone been brought into a fair state of defence, and had a garrison of 2,500 men. On the capture of these cities from Spain, Prince Frederick Henry had spent much time, blood and money. Their condition in 1672 was a

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part i. p. 41. The government of Heusden complained to the States of Holland that 'there was lack of everything.' Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, p. 67 (May 11). In Breda and 's Hertogenbosch: 'great lack of every kind necessary in the magazines, and specially of powder, munitions, etc.' *Ibid.* p. 78 (May 20).

measure of the difference between the Stadtholder's views of home defence and those of the States of Holland.

The States-General did not place all its hopes on its fortified towns. It saw the necessity of holding a strong line of defence behind some natural frontier, with all the troops that could be spared from garrison work. The line chosen was the Ijssel. On January 27, 1672, Field-Marshals Johan Maurits of Nassau and Paulus Wirtz advised the construction of such a line in the Council of State. On the 28th, Johan Maurits was entrusted by the States-General with the execution of the work. By April 30 it was completed. A 'retrenchment' was made on the left (west) bank of the river, following its windings from Ijsseloort to opposite Deventer. According to some authorities, the line, when finished, was so strong and well-engineered, that 'not a dog 'could get through, far less a man or a horse.' [1] Others were sceptical of its usefulness. It was indeed, from the judgment of eye-witnesses who would fain have approved it if they could, indefensible except with a very large force.[2]

The visitors whose observations on the Ijssel towns have already been mentioned [3] were unanimous in declaring it inefficient and even dangerous. They examined it from its beginning at Deventer, with great care. They found it simply 'a 'dry ditch, broad enough to hold only three marching abreast.' In front of the ditch was 'a fine high breastwork, sloping to 'the shore.' Where the ground was low and flat, it was not entrenched, and where an island lay in the river, the works were made on the island, not on the land. At the fords and shallows batteries were placed. At its beginning near Deventer it was in a fair state of completion, but higher up it was still full of gaps or hardly even begun. But the main fault in the construction of the line was the entire lack of flanking or reserve trenches, or any means of communication

[1] 'Ontroerde Nederland': *Nieuwe Spectator*, vol. ii.
[2] Basnage, *Annales*, pp. 210–11.
[3] See above, p. 131.

from one part of the line to another. The trench followed the loops of the river (which takes a very winding course) and ' being without proper flanks, the garrison inside it would only ' be able to defend themselves without being of any use to ' others, unless they left their own post ; and even then the ' retrenchment was not wide enough to give cover to a relief ' force.'

Other and even greater objections were borne in on the travellers as they surveyed the line. The King of France, they admitted to one another, would almost certainly be ' master on the field ' ; in numbers and strength he would far surpass the Dutch forces. In that case, the line was ' in ' no wise fit to prevent the inroad of the enemy.' If, on the other hand, the Dutch were the stronger in the field, the line was unnecessary, for the French could be attacked and defeated before they reached it.

The other very serious objection was the immense length of the line, owing to the curves in the river, which would make it impossible to concentrate troops at all the weak places at once. The enemy could choose their point of attack, raise false alarms in other places, and the defending army would be incapable of preventing a crossing. Once over, there would be small hope of driving them back. The scattered troops would not be able to gather into a solid mass before the entire French force was across the river. No fort or fortified camp had been made behind the line whither the Dutch might concentrate and make resistance until help came. And the same lack of communications would enormously increase the officers' difficulties in giving and receiving orders to and from other parts of the line, and the transport of provisions and ammunition. In a word, the line was ' of ' small service,' and if the enemy were to attack in force, it would be found useless, and the troops would have to be concentrated in the fortified towns.

Not only was the line itself a contemptible piece of work, but it was almost entirely undefended from flank movements

to north and south. Above Ijsseloort, along the banks of the Rhine as far as Schenkenschans, scarcely any defence works had been made. North of Deventer the line was not continued. It was small wonder that Louis and his generals despised it. Condé, when the time came for entering the Republic, wished to attack it in force and gain an easy victory. Louis and Turenne preferred to outflank it, and the final choice of the Rhine just below Schenkenschans for the scene of the crossing proved that the Ijssel line was an incomplete means of defence in itself.

From the first mustering of troops for review it became apparent that the army was too small to defend the line. On May 6, William, as Captain-General, took up his quarters at Doesburg with the Commission of Deputies in the Field. On May 18 the Prince reviewed the army 'on a heath about an 'hour and a half from Zutfen.' 'It is true,' wrote the Deputies to the States-General on the 21st, 'that we are quite 'satisfied as to the condition of men and horses, orders and drill, 'but we must add that the number, especially of the infantry, is 'so small that we hold it absolutely impossible to hold a position 'of such great extent therewith.'[1] Van Beverningk, writing next day to De Witt said: 'We have caused the troops to be 'accurately counted, and find the infantry not more than 9,200, 'officers and all included, the cavalry 4,800, and in all the 'Ijssel towns together there are besides these only 13 companies, 'namely, 1 at Zutfen, 5 at Doesburg, 3 at Deventer, 4 at 'Zwoll, not one at Arnhem and Kampen, and only 9 at Nij-'megen. You will please to consider, if we have to retreat 'and leave garrisons in those towns, what a fine total will be 'left to us.' Van Beverningk did not include in this account the permanent garrisons of the Ijssel towns, which amounted on paper to something over eleven thousand men.[2] Allowing

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part i. p. 55 n. 2.

[2] *Brieven aan De Witt*, ii. p. 643, Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part i. pp. 38–40, and Bijlage i., the 'army list' as drawn up on May 3, 1672, for the States-General, containing a list of all the garrisons in the cities on the Rhine and Ijssel with the names of the captains and colonels.

amply for desertions and sickness, of which there were plenty, the whole number of troops including the garrisons gathered on the Ijssel was reckoned on June 5 at 14,400 infantry and 7,600 cavalry, a total of 22,000 men,[1] exclusive of a few thousand peasants who, as a measure of despair, were sent to swell the thin ranks in the first week of June. This force had to hold an open front of about twenty miles, and garrison five towns, besides having to watch the Rhine banks between Ijsseloort and Schenkenschans.

William could not, by the terms of his Commission, communicate directly with the Government at the Hague, though he wrote occasionally to De Witt. But no brain was so active and no spirit so deeply disturbed as his during these days of feverish expectation of catastrophe. From his house at Dieren, between the river and the moorlands whence in time of peace he was used to hunt, he wrote as follows to Van Beverningk, in the evening of May 28.[2]

'The more I look at it, the more anxiety I find in it . . . I think the only means to save the country at present is to get all the force that we can scrape together down here on the Ijssel as soon as we possibly can. Therefore I would beseech you to write without delay to the Hague, in order to get as many troops as may be in any way possible from Maastricht, Breda, Den Bos (*i.e.* 's Hertogenbosch), Bergen-op-Zoom and the Flemish lands. I think the cavalry men in Holland should also be brought here, and the few infantry which may possibly be there, as well: without all which I see no possibility of being able to prevent the passage of the Ijssel. I need not tell you what a disaster it would be for the country if this came to pass, which God forfend. I think it would be the entire ruin of the State, so we must just exert all the forces we have

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, Bijlage, iv. p. 111. Extract from Resolutions of States-General, June 5, 1672. De Witt declared in the States of Holland on April 6 (more than a month previously) that the army ought to be at least 28,000 strong. Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, p. 56.

[2] De Jonge, *Verhandelingen en Ontuitgegeven Stukken*, ii. p. 385.

to prevent the said passage, and as I know no other way save that we must have more troops, so I once more beseech you to represent it very earnestly in the Hague, so that we may get what little yet remains over here with all speed.'

The next day he urged that the 2,000 Spanish cavalry, which the Governor of the Spanish Netherlands had promised to furnish in case of need, be immediately sent for, and that 'as nothing is to be feared on the side of Brabant, Zuylestein 'should be ordered hither with all speed.' [1]

In his suggestions for reinforcements William showed a bolder grasp of the necessities of the war, and of the means of supplying them, than did any of the Field Deputies. Neither Van Beverningk nor his colleagues dared suggest in their letters that Holland and Brabant be denuded of troops in order to strengthen the Ijssel line. Van Beverningk urged that more peasants be recruited and armed and sent to the front [2]—a poor expedient which proved quite worthless—and the other Deputies, while suggesting that troops be taken from Maastricht, and from the Spanish Netherlands, never mentioned the garrisons of Holland and Brabant who could easily have been spared. The Government were fortunately not deaf to William's advice, and during the first week of June about 2,000 men were despatched from Bergen-op-Zoom, Heusden, Geertruidenberg, Gorinchem, Bommel, Alkmaar and the Hague, while the five Dutch infantry regiments were recalled from the Spanish Netherlands. Most of these never reached the Ijssel at all, but joined the army as it was in retreat to Utrecht.[3] The Spanish cavalry, under the command of the Sieur de Louvignies, left the Spanish Netherlands at the end of May and arrived at Rhenen, just below Arnhem, on June 13, where they were a welcome addition to the tiny handful that was marching back towards

[1] De Jonge, *op. cit.*, p. 392. The Spanish cavalry were promised to Holland in case of need by virtue of the treaty of March 18. Zuylestein was in command of the garrison of Breda.

[2] Van Beverningk to De Witt, May 22, 1672 : *Brieven aan De Witt*, ii. p. 644.

[3] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, Bijlage, i. p. 101.

Holland. Van Beverningk described them as 'very fine folk 'and well disciplined.' [1]

William and the Deputies took leave of the States-General on April 19. Inundations were their first task; the settlement of the army in its quarters followed in May.

The drought of May and June 1672, as well as the shortage of troops, made the task of defending the Ijssel well-nigh hopeless. During April, when the river was still full, inundations had been made over the flat lands on the right bank, so that the water 'had so overflowed the whole stretch of country 'in the loop of the river near Doesburg that it was quite 'inaccessible for men and horses and gave security for a stretch 'of river as great as could be held by 6,000 men.' William himself had watched over these inundations with 'singular 'vigilance.' The Governor of Doesburg, who was ordered to close the sluices as soon as the water had reached the required level, neglected to do so, with the result that, when the drought began and the Ijssel fell, the flood-water ran off and the land was left 'naked as before.' [2]

Careless cutting of the dykes of the Old Ijssel at Doesburg caused the dam in front of the town gate to be broken and swept away, so that the Prince had to undertake the laying of a new one. To him also were entrusted the inundations in the province of Overijssel, in the hope of preventing the enemy from entering the provinces of Friesland and Groningen. Roads were broken up and sluices opened at Zwolle, Zwartsluis and Hasselt, three towns on the Zwarte Water, a few miles east of the Ijssel. All was made ready, and but one thing lacking—rain. 'The water,' wrote William to Van Beverningk on May 28, 'is beginning to fall so terribly, that 'between Ijsseloort and here (Dieren) there are quite ten places 'where one can ride through.' Next day he added as a postscript to his report: 'The water has fallen so much to-night

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, Bijlage, i. pp. 74 and 98.
[2] Letter of Deputies to States-General, May 1, 1672. Quoted Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 51.

'in the Ijssel that at the mouth no more ships can come in.' On June 3, when the armies of Louis were already besieging the Rhine towns, Van Beverningk wrote to De Witt: 'A 'broad beach is now visible in front of the retrenchments 'thrown up along the Rijn [*i.e.* between Arnhem and Schenken-'schans] so that it is possible to swim it in a hundred places, 'and the bank is accessible and of a very easy descent.'

To shortage of water and troops was added an almost complete dearth of artillery for the Ijssel line. 'We have 'not a single piece' wrote Van Beverningk to De Witt on April 25, owing to delays in drawing up the list of officers and engineers. William was only just dissuaded from returning to the Hague in person to make good the deficiency, for he thought his own reputation was being called in question on account of it in the Council of State.[1] In the middle of May, Van Beverningk wrote: 'The magazines are fairly 'well supplied, but as for cannon there is no remedy; in a 'fortnight at the utmost only seven will be ready, and we are 'mounting six to-day. The rest we must supply as we can.'

To crown all these material disadvantages, the spirit and 'morale' of the troops on the Ijssel made it impossible to repose confidence in them. William had told De Witt on May 16, two days before the review, that they would prove 'reasonably good, and in arms and equipment there is no 'reason to doubt that they were fairly well supplied.'[2] Van Beverningk wrote on May 13 that 'the troops are in better 'condition as regards horses and men than I thought, and the 'Captain-General is full of action and courage. Were the 'number according to the quality I should be inclined to go 'and meet the enemy, or at least to press them somewhat 'closer.' They were, however, badly and irregularly paid, with the result that desertions daily thinned the ranks. 'So

[1] *Brieven aan De Witt*, ii. pp. 635–6: Van Beverningk to De Witt.

[2] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, *op. cit.* 73. On May 28, De Witt said in the States of Holland: 'Everything must be hastened to the Ijssel: the ammu-'nition is already sent and guns cast and to be cast: everything is arranged in 'good order, and affairs will yet go well.' Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, p. 87.

'many soldiers have deserted in marching and countermarching,' wrote Van Beverningk on May 28, 'that it is quite 'incredible, and is not to be entirely imputed to the officers. 'The pay is so much delayed that one cannot depend upon it.' It was difficult to get hay for the horses: 'there is practically 'none round Velp and Rhede,' wrote William, 'and this causes 'great disorder.'[1] The artillerymen began to desert bodily and would have continued to do so 'had we not solaced them 'with some cash.' Unless pay is provided 'we run risk that 'nobody will stay at all.'[2] It should be remembered that the troops were paid by the provinces which raised them, through their captains, and not by a central authority. The provincial States were to blame for the delay.

Morale declined rapidly as the French drew nearer, and the Deputies wrote on June 1 that 'most of the officers 'are quite inexperienced, and the troops themselves absolutely 'undisciplined, and besides that, neither officers nor men are 'endowed with the courage necessary for withstanding the 'enemy. They are on the contrary nervous and fearful; the 'armed peasants are absolutely inexperienced and very little 'can be expected from them.'[3] When the French began to master the Rhine towns one by one, this 'nervousness' became a 'panic terror,' and on June 10 Van Beverningk wrote to De Witt: 'It is impossible to write or to make 'anyone believe in what a lamentable condition we and our 'officers are in this poor field-army.'[4]

The Prince of Orange was at once profoundly depressed at all the outward circumstances and the state of the army, and filled with a restless courage and determination to hold the line as long as possible. For himself, in spite of his restricted command and green inexperience, the spring of 1672 was not without its compensations. He, who had led a life of disappointment, repression and enforced inaction, was at last in the very heart of affairs. The times were too anxious for him

[1] William to the Deputies, May 29: De Jonge, *op. cit.*, ii.
[2] Van Beverningk to the States-General, June 4: De Jonge, *op. cit.*, ii.
[3] De Jonge, *op. cit.*, ii. p. 399.
[4] *Brieven aan De Witt*, ii. p. 650.

to feel or express elation, but the glimpses of him during May and June give an impression of ill-concealed excitement, untameable activity. 'The Lord Prince of Orange,' wrote the cautious Van Beverningk to De Witt on June 10, 'is very 'spirited, but depressed about the condition of the army, and I 'fear that his courage, not being well seconded, will bring him 'into some extremity.' [1]

The hampering 'Instructions,' under which the Captain-General worked, more than once brought the State and its army into peril.[2] By the fifth article of these Instructions, William was forbidden 'to exercise any sort of authority 'within the territory of a province represented in the States-'General without the express and voluntary consent of the 'States of the said province, or to undertake to do anything 'in the territory of one or other of the said sovereign provinces.' At the very outset of operations, when the army was going into quarters behind the Ijssel, the dangers and absurdities of this article were made manifest. On May 17, Van Beverningk described to De Witt the following impasse: 'The Deputies of the Veluwe (the district of Gelderland 'in which the army lay), since our encampment happens to 'be along the edge of the Veluwe, have shown themselves very 'ill-content, having inferred from Article 5 of the Instructions 'that the encampment could not and should not have taken 'place without their intervention and advice.'[3] The Council of War pointed out that they had leave from the provincial States to bring the army into Gelderland, that the Ijssel line had been made at the request of those States, by the labour of their own people, and that the encampment was a purely military matter, to be carried out by the Captain-General. If the words of Article 5 were applicable to the present case, 'we 'shall not be able to move our troops to the most convenient 'places of defence, if we are attacked by the enemy in Gelder-'land.' The troops as they gathered for the review on the 18th did damage to some young rye and thatched cottages.

[1] *Brieven aan De Witt*, ii. p. 651.
[2] See above, chap. iv. p. 94.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 638–9.

The States of Gelderland demanded an immediate conference on the subject, in the hope, as Van Beverningk hinted, of securing compensation and exemption from taxation on account of the damage. Van Beverningk saw that not only the authority of the Captain-General, but that of the whole body of Deputies in the Field was endangered. The Deputies, being 'charged with the protection of the United Netherlands,' were empowered by their commission with the sole direction of the troops, without distinction of time or place. The fifth article was meant as 'a precaution against such attempts 'as were formerly made against Amsterdam' (*i.e.* by William II in 1650), but must not be abused so as to cripple every movement of the army.[1] De Witt supported Van Beverningk's complaint, and referred him to a resolution of the States-General of June 4, 1671, by which the Deputies were declared superior to the States of a frontier province. 'The Union,' he said, 'may use more authority in a province such as Gelder-'land where all the fortifications have been made at the cost of 'all the States together, and where the magazines have been 'stocked at the common expense, than in Holland, Zeeland or 'Friesland, where the provinces provide everything out of 'their own purses.'[2]

Van Beverningk, in his daily intercourse with William, became more and more impressed with his character and qualities, and dissatisfied with the conditions that cramped his command. On every possible occasion he upheld the Captain-General's authority, and even pleaded for its extension to the Government at home. Thus, the States of Friesland and Utrecht empowered the Deputies in the Field to punish and cashier all officers in their 'repartition' of the army whose companies were incomplete, but omitted all mention of the Prince. Van Beverningk wrote: 'His respect and 'authority is more concerned therein than ours, and lack of 'power to punish in part takes away his authority to command.'

[1] Van Beverningk to De Witt, May 17, 18 and 21, 1672, *Brieven aan De Witt*, ii. pp. 638–42.

[2] De Witt to Van Beverningk, May 23, 1672: *Brieven*, iv. p. 343.

He asked that the province of Holland, as far as she was concerned, would confer on him the power of punishment and pardon.[1]

No reply from De Witt to this request is extant, but his general attitude towards William was not such as to give the Prince much encouragement. When the Deputies and the Captain-General went into quarters on the Ijssel, he wrote anxiously insisting on the absolute power of the Deputies to make all decisions, and the obligation of William, after tendering his advice, to obey and carry out their orders. 'And I hope,' he wrote, 'His Highness will not set himself against 'this, and also that you and the other deputies will keep the 'business on this footing in practice and will not allow it to be 'brought into a bad usage . . . otherwise I think the deputies 'not only unprofitable but even unserviceable and tending to 'belittle the State.'

William did not 'set himself against' the limitations of his position, and with wise self-restraint waited until political revolution untied his hands. He appears to have worked harmoniously with Van Beverningk, for the latter wrote to De Witt on May 17 that he had had a long conversation with William on the subject of Article 6 of the Instructions (concerning William's subordination to the Deputies). 'And I think,' he said, 'His Highness did not 'take it ill in me, and I believe our deliberations will continue 'to run smoothly as they ought.'

De Witt was too honourable to slight William's influence and advice, though he was fearful of his authority. The four letters which remain of his correspondence with the Prince during this spring and summer are respectful and even obliging in tone. He asked the Prince 'to inform me from time to 'time in what condition affairs stand and what your Highness 'thinks I can contribute, according to my feeble capacity and 'small powers, to the strengthening of Your Highness and the 'States Army with all necessary commodities.' He supported

[1] Van Beverningk to De Witt, May 27, 1672, *Brieven aan De Witt*, ii. p. 645.

William's request of May 16 for 4,000 armed peasants, which the Prince in his extremity had begged for in default of more troops. He kept him informed of the condition of the fleet, and never failed piously to commit him into 'the Lord God's 'holy keeping.'[1]

[1] *Brieven*, iv. pp. 328–385 *passim*.

CHAPTER VII

The War Opens, May–June 1672

'Contre Turenne, Condé, Luxembourg, Vauban, 130,000 combatants, une artillerie prodigieuse, et de l'argent avec lequel on attaquait encore la fidélité des commandants des places ennemis, la Hollande n'avait à opposer qu'un jeune prince d'une constitution faible, qui avoit vu ni siéges ni combats, et environ 25,000 mauvais soldats en quoi consistait alors toute la garde du Pays.' Voltaire, *Siècle de Louis XIV.*

On May 5, 1672, Louis XIV reached Charleroi, where for a week he remained reviewing his troops. Louvois had laboured indefatigably for the last seven years to make the French army the largest and finest in Europe. The invasion and conquest of Lorraine in the autumn of 1670 had been conceived as a preparatory exercise for the new army destined eventually for the reduction of Holland. The Duke fled, and any resistance that individual cities were prepared to make was effectually damped by Louvois' orders that 'all cavalry, 'infantry and civilians of Lorraine who have contributed to 'the defence of a town, will be sent to the galleys, if, fifteen 'days after its capitulation, they do not ransom themselves at 'a hundred crowns apiece.' [1]

The 'voyage de Flandre' which Louis undertook in 1671 was another advertisement designed to impress upon the world the strength and magnificence of Vauban's new fortifications of the towns conquered from Spain in the war of 1667. A year previously Louvois had boasted to D'Estrades of this new line of frontier fortresses: 'I can easily believe that the 'construction of fortifications in the towns of Flanders will 'disturb the Dutch; doubtless they will be filled with wonder

[1] Rousset, *Vie de Louvois*, i. chap. iv., for a full account of the Lorraine expedition.

'and jealousy.'[1] Knowing his own ability to create an 'invincible Armada' on land for the service of his master, he welcomed rather than feared the publicity of his gigantic preparations, and no day in his life can have been more satisfactory to the young Secretary of State for War—he was now but thirty-one years old—than May 5, 1672, when he assembled before his master's eyes at Charleroi a vast army, numbering upwards of 100,000 men. Its exact strength is variously given by different authors. The army list presented to Louis by Louvois on February 4 showed that, besides the 8,000 'troupes d'élite' of the 'Maison du Roi'[2] there were 46 regiments of French infantry, making about 56,000 men; 25,000 cavalry, chiefly French, and no fewer than 30,000 newly-raised foreign troops drawn from Switzerland and Italy.[3] This makes a total of 119,000 men. Voltaire[4] mentions 112,000, while some Dutch writers, probably with exaggeration, estimate close on 150,000. One anonymous Dutchman[5] states that 'it was reckoned at more than 300,000 'heads all told, and indeed was no less, counting all the pages, 'lacqueys, coachmen, carriers, boys, scouts, wives and camp-'followers.' Besides the army at Charleroi, there were the troops of the electors of Cologne and Münster, not yet joined to the French main body. These had been placed under the command of Marshal Luxembourg, and numbered about 20,000 men.

'Jamais,' says Voltaire, 'on n'avait vu une armée si 'magnifique et en même temps mieux disciplinée.' Not only had Louvois reformed and reorganised the 'Maison du Roi' as the model for the whole army to copy, but had immensely improved the standard of efficiency in all regiments. This had been accomplished chiefly through the appointment

[1] Rousset, i. p. 393.

[2] *I.e.* the 'Régiment du Roi,' 'Mousquetaires' (cavalry since 1605) 'gen-'darmes' (including the English and Scottish regiments) and some regiments of 'chevaux-légers' commanded by Princes of the blood.

[3] Rousset, i. chap. iv.

[4] *Siècle de Louis XIV*, chap. x.

[5] Author of *D'Ontroerde Leeuw*, 1674.

of Martinet,[1] and other officers of the 'Maison du Roi' in 1668 as inspectors of the other infantry regiments. By insisting that the colonels and captains must keep up their companies in numbers and efficiency without the aid of false musters, the inspectors did much to mitigate, if not eradicate, the root evil of all seventeenth-century armies. The Government, while it would not undertake the payment of the rank and file, as in a modern army, paid the officers regularly, and visited with cashiering or suspension the captain who was convicted of false musters.[2]

A magnificent train of artillery, consisting of ninety-seven pieces of cannon, was the feature of the army of which Louvois had most reason to be proud. Until 1669 the artillery had been a separate organisation, consisting of a few loosely-graded officers, engineers and gunners under a 'grand-maistre de 'l'artillerie,' who was a great noble appointed by the Crown. From 1669 onwards Louvois embodied the artillery as part of the army, and created artillery regiments. Two battalions of 'fusiliers' accompanied the siege-train in 1672, armed with the flint-lock as opposed to the musket. Their place was with the cannon, among which they were distributed during sieges or in the field. Louvois was determined that this war should prove the French superiority in siege warfare—of which he foresaw a good deal—and that this branch of arms should no longer be a speciality of the Dutch.[3]

During the past four years, Louvois had drained western Europe for soldiers.[4] The small states of Italy were too weak to resist, though not to resent, the enrolment of their youth by French recruiting agents. Parma, Modena, Lucca and Florence supplied a 'Royal Italian' regiment consisting of 3,000 men. Venice alone succeeded in resisting the attempt

[1] From whom the word 'martinet' was derived.

[2] Rousset, *Louvois*, i. chap. iv. *passim*.

[3] Rousset, i. pp. 238–9. The flint-lock was less likely to produce a conflagration while it was being loaded among the open barrels of gunpowder which surrounded the cannon. It had also an easier method of lighting the powder than the cumbersome matchlock or musket.

[4] Rousset, i. p. 327.

to draw her into military vassalage to France. Even Genoa, after refusing for some time to permit levies to be made in Corsica, was forced, by the brutal seizure of her galleys, to offer a contingent of 1,200 men. 'They will have to be wise 'in future,' wrote Louvois as though he were punishing disobedient children, 'and learn that it is not a good thing 'to refuse what the King requires of them.' [1]

Piedmont was partly bullied, partly flattered into raising four regiments, and no less than 19,000 men were drawn from the Catholic cantons of Switzerland. The Protestants were firm to their political and religious interests. The ancient spiritual bonds between Swiss and French Protestantism were recalled by the ministers in prayers to Heaven from the pulpits 'for the poor churches of their religion who 'are persecuted in France.' [2] They denounced the levies, knowing that they were to be used against their Dutch co-religionists. 'I am sure,' wrote Stoppa at last in April 1672, 'that the Protestant cantons have resolved with common 'accord to give the King no troops as long as he makes war 'on the Dutch.' [3]

Besides these new foreign regiments, there were about 6,000 English auxiliaries lent by Charles II under the command of James, Duke of Monmouth.

'Le Roy Soleil' had reason to be satisfied, and he anticipated his triumphant progress in a characteristic manner. 'The King,' says Voltaire, 'with so many advantages, sure of 'his fortune and of his glory, brought with him an historian 'to write of his victories; this was Pellisson, a man . . . better 'able to write well than to avoid flattery.'

So vast an army had never been seen in Europe before at the command of a single human being, and destined for a single military object. Philip II had essayed to conquer England

[1] Rousset, i. p. 330: Louvois to Gomont, May 9, 1673.
[2] The recruiting agent, Stoppa, to Louvois, September 22, 1671, Rousset, i. p. 334.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 335.

with 30,000 troops and sailors on board the Armada, to be joined by 17,000 from the Netherlands under Alexander of Parma. Gustavus Adolphus had entered Germany in 1630 with 13,000, gradually raised by the aid of French subsidies to 30,000. Richelieu, when he plunged France into the Thirty Years' War, did indeed bring immense numbers into the field, but his campaigns were waged on scattered fronts, from Flanders to Switzerland and Italy, and the armies were never concentrated into a united force under one supreme command. Louis himself had entered the Netherlands in 1667 with 35,000 men. Now to the ambition of 1667 were added the far more deadly passions of revenge, hatred and an overweening pride that would only be satisfied by the complete humiliation of its enemy. A new terror had arisen in Europe, of which the army gathered on the Meuse was the weapon and the symbol. It took forty years of painful effort in war and diplomacy before William III, and the men who worked with and after him, could defeat Louis's attempt to dominate Europe by military force.

From Charleroi, Louis informed Monterey, the Governor of the Spanish Netherlands, that he was going to march through Spanish territory on his way to the Dutch Republic. Monterey protested, but without effect,[1] and on May 17, Louis, with Turenne's army corps, arrived at Visé on the Meuse, between Maastricht and Liège, where he awaited the arrival of Condé with his division from Lorraine. Turenne was in favour of leaving a body of some 10,000 men to occupy the towns and forts round Maastricht, so as to prevent the garrison from leaving the town. He saw no wisdom in wasting time besieging so formidable a place. The main army could then proceed to the military bases prepared for them in the friendly territory of Cologne,[2] advance down the Rhine, take the fortresses in Cleves, which were not in a condition to offer long resistance, and force an entry into the Republic by way of the Rhine or

[1] Their letters quoted in Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part i. p. 65 n.
[2] In particular Neuss, which had been fortified in the previous year.

Ijssel. Condé, who generally differed from his fellow-general, advised besieging Maastricht in force, and holding it as a check on possible movements by the Spaniards. Nothing was less likely than that Spain would act seriously against Louis, and Turenne's plan was adopted. Until this decision was taken, the Dutch Government were uncertain whether the French would invade 'Brabant and the Meyerye of Den 'Bosch' or march to 'Cologne and then to the Rhine towns, 'and so to the Ijssel.' [1]

Louis, with Condé and Turenne, crossed the Meuse on May 22, leaving Chamilly to secure the approaches to Maastricht. Maaseyck, Tongeren, Bilsen and St. Truien (all Spanish towns lying west of the Meuse), the rock and castle of Valkenburg and the town of Sittard a few miles away from Maastricht east of the river were occupied by French garrisons. The Meierije of 's Hertogenbosch was put under contribution.[2] The main army joined the troops of Cologne at Neuss, and found them in a very poor condition—'pas un grain de blé 'converté en farine.' Condé crossed the Rhine below Kaiserswerth on May 28, and proceeded up the right bank towards Wezel. It had been decided to attack Wezel and Burik, Rijnberk and Orsooi simultaneously, so as to waste no time. Condé reached the fort on the Lippe, close to Wezel, on May 31. On June 3 the outpost surrendered, and on the 5th, Van Santen, Governor of Wezel, gave up the town and marched out towards Emmerik with the honours of war.[3] Citizens, government and officers refused to hold out longer.

Burik, which lay on the opposite bank, was invested by Turenne from the west, and prepared to make a stout defence. The tiny garrison of 300 men did its best to deceive the enemy by placing lighted matches at intervals along the walls to

[1] De Witt to his brother Cornelis, May 15, 1672, *Brieven*, ii. p. 358.

[2] Mignet, iv. pp. 4–5; Rousset, i. p. 354; Griffet *Receuil de Lettres*, i. pp. 26–30.

[3] Van Santen was condemned by court-martial on September 20 to the loss of all his posts, twelve years' banishment, and confiscation of all his property. Sylvius, *Vervolg aan Aitzema*, i. p. 368.

impersonate soldiers. But when Turenne moved to the attack in the night of June 4, the garrison lost heart and laid down its arms.[1]

Louis himself was in command of the operations against Orsooi and Rijnberk. Orsooi surrendered on the 3rd; Rijnberk on the 6th. At Rijnberk there was the first clear case of treachery. The garrison was only 1,000 strong; 'not enough to defend half the Counterscarps.'[2] On June 3 the commander, a certain Colonel D'Ossery,[3] allowed an agent of the Bishop of Strasburg, in the service of France, to examine the works, in spite of the cry of the chief engineer, 'It is 'treachery and spying!' On June 4 the Duc de Duras came in to parley with D'Ossery, who, that evening, gave orders to cease fire, 'without having given the Council of War the least 'information.' On the 6th Duras came again, and it was arranged, again without consulting the other officers, that the garrison should march out to Maastricht.

Condé proceeded to occupy Emmerik, whose garrison had already retired to Schenkenschans, took Doetinchem on the 9th, and at the same time invested Rees. The garrison of 500 men was prepared to make a defence, but panic took hold of the town, and both commander and troops were forced to surrender ignominiously to their own citizens. The town surrendered on June 10.

Thus, in ten short days, ended all De Witt's hopes of a prolonged resistance from the Rhine towns. The effect on the army behind the Ijssel, and on the Government and people at home in Holland, as town after town surrendered, may be gathered from the letters that passed between Van Beverningk and De Witt.

Van Beverningk wrote to De Witt on June 8: 'There is 'panic terror and so great a fright among the officers of

[1] *Nieuwe Spectator*, ii.: *Krijgskundige Beschouwingen, over den oorlog van* 1672–78.

[2] B.M. Dutch Pamphlets, 2428. Account by Captains Klerck and Uyttenbogaert, of the surrender of Rijnberk.

[3] D'Ossery was executed on August 22, after being tried by court-martial. Sylvius, *Vervolg aan Aitzema*, i. p. 369.

'our army, that I also am in fear when I consider what we have 'to expect from such behaviour. . . . This town (Zutfen) 'is full of such fear and irresolution, that, were it not that our 'presence somewhat encourages them, they would fall into 'confusion. The enemy is before the gates and we expect 'every hour to be attacked.' [1]

De Witt, hearing on June 8 of the fall of Wezel and Orsooi, and the probable surrender of Rijnberk, Rees and Emmerik, wrote on June 9: 'We hope and pray Almighty 'God that a constant and obstinate defence of Nijmegen may 'once more repair what is lost in strength and reputation by 'the sudden fall of the towns on the Rhine.'

He wrote to his brother Cornelis on the 18th that, in consequence of the fall of all these places 'without a blow' 'the hearts of the people here in Holland are seized with 'perplexity and depression. Everything here is in confusion 'and disorder, so that in nearly all the towns of Holland, the 'people, against the orders of their governors, are holding 'up all goods as they pass through.' [2]

It was necessary that some decision be taken as to the policy of the army in face of these disasters.

On June 3 a critical Council of War was held at Deventer, under the presidency of Van Beverningk. The six chief officers of the army were asked for their advice on the possibility of a further defence of the Ijssel. The question was put: 'What they thought *should* be done with the troops, and 'what *could* be done, and especially whether they were fit to 'maintain the posts along the Ijssel, or whether other measures 'should be taken to leave this post and . . . divide the troops 'among the towns along the Ijssel and so backwards (towards 'Holland).'

Nearly all the officers were in favour of abandoning the Ijssel. Field-Marshal Wirtz put forward the stark facts of the situation. They had not enough troops to defend the

[1] *Brieven aan De Witt*, ii. pp. 649–51.
[2] De Witt, *Brieven*, iv. p. 349 and p. 385.

Betuwe and the Ijssel together. The enemy were remarkably strong in cavalry, while they, even when the Spanish reinforcements came, were correspondingly weak. 'A broad bare 'beach had appeared all along the entrenchments even at high 'water.' The distances between the various posts were such that the enemy could cross between them while their own troops were out of touch with one another. If the enemy defeated the Ijssel army or scattered it, the defence of Utrecht and Holland would be impossible. 'We should then have to 'make with precipitation and confusion those preparations 'which can now be made in good order.' In short 'to advise 'holding the Ijssel would be to misrepresent the state of 'affairs.'

The only officer who protested against a retreat was the general of artillery, the Count of Hoorn. He asked 'where they could settle, if they abandoned the Ijssel,' and pointed out 'what consternation would thereby be caused 'throughout the whole country.' [1]

The Deputies and the Captain-General, after dismissing the officers, dared not make any decision without consulting the Government. They therefore asked that on June 5 a council should be held at Arnhem with some deputies from the States-General, in order to decide on so momentous a step.

De Witt was horrified at the proposal to abandon the Ijssel. He assured Van Beverningk that to await the enemy on the rivers was the one policy which had the approval of the States of Holland and of the States-General, and urged him to 'put aside with vigour and singular earnestness' any proposal to the contrary, and above all 'not to suffer that 'such thoughts come to the knowledge of the lower officers 'or common soldiers, as it would only further weaken the 'spirit and courage of the army.' He promised speedy reinforcements from the Spanish Netherlands, Breda and Gorinchem, which, with the peasants and waardtgelders, would be an addition of 30,000 men. Besides, their cause

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, Bijlage iii.

was righteous, 'on which we must build resolution and 'steadfastness, and expect the aid of the Lord of Hosts with 'firm trust.' It cannot be said that De Witt had much practical grasp of the military situation.

On Sunday, June 5, at 10 P.M., the Deputies in the Field, with the Prince of Orange, met the Deputies from the States-General. The new-comers included four of the leading governors of Holland. Cornelis Hop, of Amsterdam, was a member of Burgomaster Valckenier's faction, and therefore inclined to oppose De Witt. He was a man of some eloquence and power in speaking, as appeared later in the summer. Pieter de Groot, son of Hugo Grotius, was one of the governors of Rotterdam, a great friend of De Witt's, and had until February been the States' ambassador to Louis XIV. Van Dijckvelt was a native of Utrecht. He was sent a few weeks later on a mission to England, and on his return settled in his own province, doing what he could to mitigate the severity of French rule. Later, as is well known, he was a servant and adviser of William III.[1] Gaspar Fagel, of Haarlem, was the leader of that powerful middle party which had striven to gain a satisfactory settlement of the Prince of Orange's affairs.[2] He was now Greffier to the States-General, and, when De Witt resigned, he succeeded him as Grand Pensionary of Holland, in which post he remained as William's chief agent and supporter until his death in 1688.

No more influential men could have been found to solve the impasse in which the Field Deputies found themselves. Yet even they would give no definite commands. They disliked the idea of retreat, because each province would then try to use its troops for its own defence, leaving 'neither 'order nor government.' They therefore begged that the Ijssel might be held as long as was in any way possible, and William and the Deputies 'acquiesced.' But, since war was at best an uncertain affair, they threw the final responsibility on William and the Field Deputies, 'to resolve from time to

[1] See *Burnet*, i. p. 569, ed. 1823.

[2] See above, chap. iv.

'time to act with the forces of the country as they shall think fit.'

Thus nothing of any value had been gained by consultation with the Central Government.

William's own opinion on the situation is not recorded verbatim in any of the reports. But it is most probable that he felt, with the other officers, the impossibility of defending the Ijssel. Before Louis chose the Rhine route, when it was still possible that he would fall on Brabant, he had whispered his fears privately to Van Beverningk. 'His 'Highness said to me this very afternoon in my ear: "We 'cannot stay here and let Holland be lost."'[1] But he was determined not to embarrass his superiors once a contrary decision was taken. His 'action and courage' were confined to the task immediately in hand.

During the five days after the Arnhem meeting the situation grew rapidly worse. While Louis pressed down the Rhine, the Bishop of Münster began the invasion and conquest of Overijssel. He mastered Lingen, a domain of the Prince of Orange, Borculo and a number of other small places, and joined Luxembourg and the Cologne troops under the walls of Groenlo on June 1. When the news of the fall of Wezel and Burik reached the army, and the way was opened to Nijmegen, 'where everything is lacking,' Van Beverningk plainly told De Witt that, as no reinforcements had arrived, they could not hold the Ijssel. Owing to the drought, the promontory of Schenkenschans no longer existed, and its fortifications were not in a reassuring condition. In his opinion, even that great key-fortress was 'not in a state of great resistance.' The danger that the enemy would break through into the Betuwe was imminent, 'and so we shall be surrounded and starved out 'before and behind.' He suggested sending the cavalry to Utrecht and shipping off the infantry from Kampen to Amersfoort, in case the enemy cut off their retreat. Van Beverningk was growing daily more concerned for Holland, and did not

[1] Van Beverningk to De Witt, May 17, *Brieven aan De Witt*, ii. p. 640.

conceal his anxiety to have done with the Ijssel and take up the defence of his own province.[1]

The state of Nijmegen gave cause for great anxiety. 'The water in the lower Rhine [*i.e.* Waal] before the fortress is 'so low that the cows walk through it every day to pasture 'on the other side, and on the whole of that side of the Over-'betuwe not a spade has been stuck into the earth, we cannot 'understand why.'[2]

William rode thither on June 8th to see what could be done. He first appointed De Montbas, Commissary-General of the Cavalry, as governor of the city, but the burghers rose in revolt, refusing to have anyone set over them who was not a native of Gelderland. De Montbas was a Frenchman, closely connected by marriage with Pieter de Groot. William followed the advice of the local burgomasters and appointed Van Welderen, a cavalry officer of the garrison, who had until this year been governor of the city. It proved a happy choice, and, when Nijmegen was besieged, Van Welderen led the defence in a manner which earned praise from Turenne himself.

Since the fall of Rees and Emmerik it had become more than probable that the enemy would shortly break through into the Betuwe. Insufficient preparations had been made against this probability. If they did so, the flank of the army on the Ijssel would be turned, and the French would be able either to cut off its retreat completely and annihilate it, or at least to force it to make a speedy retreat to the next line of defence—perhaps to Utrecht, perhaps beyond to the very borders of Holland itself. That the Dutch should have left the banks of the Rijn between Arnhem and Schenkenschans unfortified and insufficiently provided with troops shows a negligence and incompetence almost unbelievable. It is true that, with the present division of forces, they had not enough troops fully to defend both the Rijn banks and the Ijssel line. The folly of over-garrisoning Maastricht, and trying to

[1] See letters of Van Beverningk to De Witt, June 7 and 8 : *Brieven aan De Witt*, ii.
[2] The Deputies to the States of Holland, June 8 : De Jonge, ii. p. 427.

garrison every town that lay on or near the frontier, at the expense of an efficient field army, was demonstrated with terrible clarity by the disaster which overwhelmed the country on June 12.

De Montbas was left in charge of the Betuwe and the Rijn bank between Arnhem and Schenkenschans, after being disappointed of the governorship of Nijmegen. He had four regiments under him, two of horse and two of infantry. On June 8 he had received orders from Van Beverningk to the effect that 'he must march to the defence of Nijmegen as soon 'as he sees it in danger of being besieged.' Next day came a letter from Field-Marshal Wirtz explaining that De Montbas was not to be governor of Nijmegen, but adding 'His High-'ness wishes nevertheless that you should exercise command in 'the Betuwe, as you have been commanded.' De Montbas had asked for reinforcements, and on the 8th two cavalry regiments under Harsolte and La Lecq were despatched from the Ijssel with orders to march to the Betuwe. Unfortunately William's absence at Nijmegen caused 'great alarm' in the army, and the two regiments paused at Velp, north of the Rhine, 'where 'they will stay to-night [the 9th]; to-morrow morning they 'will march into the Betuwe, to follow your orders.' The infantry regiment of Golstein lay at Arnhem, also under orders to march next morning, and meet Montbas at Pannerden.[1]

In the interval between the writing of this letter and its despatch William and the Deputies took a step which was to cost them dear. The town of Doetinchem, which lay only two hours' march east of Doesburg, the headquarters of the Ijssel army, surrendered to Condé on the evening of June 9. Condé's desire to attack the Ijssel line in force was well known. It looked as though he must proceed against Doesburg, linking up his army with that of Luxembourg and the Bishop of Münster, who had together just captured Groenlo. William judged it necessary that all troops that could be spared be

[1] Letter of Wirtz to De Montbas, quoted *in extenso* by De Montbas in his *Mémoires*, also in Basnage, ii. p. 222; see also Van Sypestein en De Bordes.

concentrated on the Ijssel. He wrote to La Lecq and Harsolte and Golstein ordering them to return at once to Doesburg. Wirtz added a postscript to his letter to De Montbas at 5 A.M. on the morning of June 10, telling them that the reinforcements had been cancelled.

De Montbas, when he heard he was not to be reinforced, became exceedingly angry. It would appear from his conduct on the 11th that fear and disgust and some misunderstanding of his orders, rather than actual treachery, prompted him to desert the post which had been entrusted to him.

On the 10th, as soon as he received Wirtz's letter, he began to break up his force. The Tolhuis at Lobith on the Rhine, just below Schenkenschans, the only fortified building in the Betuwe, was stripped of its cannon and most of its garrison.[1] The two regiments of foot, those of Aylva and Van Gent, were ordered by De Montbas to retire to Nijmegen. He himself with the cavalry proceeded to Dieren, to find the Prince of Orange. He arrived there on the 11th, in the morning. According to his own account, he 'marched all night.' William gave a different account to the Deputies whom he summoned at once to Dieren that afternoon. De Montbas had, said the Prince, left the Betuwe without informing his Highness, had retired to Arnhem, where he had rested at his pleasure, and had been brought thence by the Prince's orders to Dieren. He had appeared 'with much trembling of arms and hands,' and offered the Prince his orders of June 8 as a justification of his conduct. These were to the effect that if he saw Nijmegen in danger of being besieged he was to throw himself into it with both cavalry and infantry. Now Nijmegen was not yet in any danger. One sentence in the letter, from Van Beverningk, of June 8, might indeed give some colour to his proceedings, viz. 'that you do not wait to be attacked in your position, or

[1] The Tolhuis was a tower of some strength, and had resisted attacks by Spaniards a century before. It was, as its name implies, a douane for river traffic. It has now been destroyed, though the foundations are still visible in the village of Lobith.

'till you are forced to retreat, but that, seeing the approach 'of the enemy, and that there is danger to the town of 'Nijmegen of being invested or besieged, you march at 'once towards her to defend her.' De Montbas had seen some of Condé's dragoons taking soundings in the shallows of the river on June 10, just above the Tolhuis. He had chased them away, and then, seeing the French gathered in force on the hills of Elten, had decided to retreat, not, however, towards Nijmegen, but to Arnhem.

The Deputies considered that the orders of June 8 had been cancelled by the subsequent appointment of Van Welderen to take command in Nijmegen, for they wrote to Fagel on the same day (June 11): 'Since the order about the command at 'Nijmegen had been changed, he has left that post (the Betuwe) 'without telling anyone, wherefore the Prince of Orange has put 'him under arrest. What misunderstanding has made him do 'this, we cannot yet discover.' [1]

The modern historians of the war, Van Sypestein and De Bordes, think De Montbas should have ceased to concern himself with Nijmegen after receiving Wirtz's letter and considered himself bound to defend the Betuwe until further orders. Had his reinforcements arrived, he would probably have done so. To leave the Betuwe in face of the enemy before Nijmegen was so much as threatened was neither wise nor brave, nor in accordance with his instructions. He did not even trouble to conduct his men personally into the town, but left them to make their own report to Van Welderen while he made his way to Arnhem, 'sous prétexte,' says an old historian, 'd'avertir Son Altesse d'un péril qu'il avait rendu 'inévitable.' [2]

[1] De Jonge, ii. p. 454.

[2] Basnage, *Annales*, ii. p. 222. De Montbas was tried by court-martial at Utrecht, and found guilty of 'neglect of duty.' He was deprived of all his posts and condemned to fifteen years' imprisonment. He escaped from confinement, joined the French, and wrote letters to the Prince and other members of the court-martial challenging them to duels. His letters were returned to him, on William's orders, by the hands of the army executioner. He revenged himself by writing his own *Mémoires*, justifying his own conduct and accusing the Prince of cowardice. They were published at Utrecht in 1673.

As soon as De Montbas had reported to the Prince his own defection, William despatched Marshal Wirtz with the two regiments of Harsolte and La Lecq (so inopportunely recalled) to take his place on the Rijn banks at Lobith, where the French were now expected to cross. Turenne had prevailed with Louis to push across at once into the Betuwe and so drive a wedge into the heart of the country. William would thus be forced to retreat to Utrecht and his army could be attacked and cut to pieces as it marched. On the evening of June 11 Louis arrived on the heights of Elten, a couple of miles from Lobith and the Tolhuis. Condé was already constructing a bridge, but in order to save time it was decided to send the cavalry over by a ford just above the Tolhuis to secure the left bank and chase away whatever defenders made their appearance. The Rijn at Lobith was not, in 1672, what it is now—the marshy remains of the old river bed. Modern engineering has entirely changed the course of Waal and Rijn at this point, so that Schenkenschans, which then lay at the extreme end of the jut of land formed by the separation of the Rijn from the Waal, is now nearly a mile distant from the southern (left) shore of the Waal, and the Rijn leaves the Waal at Pannerden, seven or eight kilometres below the old point of division. The course of the old Rijn is still visible at Lobith; it is simply a stagnant marsh about fifty yards wide.[1]

In this dry summer of 1672 the water in the Rijn was not more than four feet deep just above the Tolhuis, where the stream slewed round a corner, and a sandy ridge on the left bank made the crossing easy. Two batteries were set up by the French during the night of June 11–12 to cover the advance of the cavalry. Wirtz arrived at the Tolhuis late on the 11th. Besides the cavalry he brought with him from the Ijssel, he was joined by the infantry whom De Montbas had sent to Nijmegen. Van Welderen had refused to receive them in the

[1] See Van Sypestein èn dè Bordes, part i. p. 69. n. 1, and the maps published by Nijhoff in the series *Geschiedkundige Atlas van Nederland.*

town and had sent them back to their duty on the river bank.[1]

The 'passage du Rhin,' which took place in the early morning of June 12, was long celebrated in French annals as one of the most daring feats of warfare ever executed. Actually, it was about as easy and safe an operation as could have been chosen, though, as several of the most exalted French nobles lost their lives in it, and as Louis himself was looking on from the heights of Elten two miles away, it was not unnaturally surrounded with an aura of romance. Louis's own description of it—'hardi, vigoureux, plein 'd'éclat et glorieux pour la nation'—shows that it was an action entirely to his taste.

The Comte de Guiche first entered the water, followed by the Cuirassiers, and a great body of eager young nobles, burning to distinguish themselves under the eyes of their sovereign. Wirtz and his cavalry charged down to the river bank and delivered their fire into the midst of the Cuirassiers. The discharge did some execution—the Comte de Nogent, Maréchal de Camp, was killed, and in the confusion about thirty officers and men were drowned.[2]

But the French artillery was pouring a murderous fire into the Dutch squadrons. Unsupported by their own infantry, who were posted half a mile further down, around the Tolhuis, and being entirely without any artillery, since De Montbas had carefully withdrawn it all, they lost heart and, when the French continued to press their way over the river, turned and fled towards Nijmegen.

Condé, and with him his nephew, the Duc de Longueville, a young rake of twenty-two,[3] now followed the triumphant cavalry in a small boat, and summoned the Dutch infantry,

[1] Van Sypestein en de Bordes, part i. p. 71. n. 2.

[2] *Mémoires du Comte de Guiche.* Guiche's memoir of the crossing is very valuable, being the work of an eye-witness who did not overrate the difficulties while giving due importance to the rapidity of the stream and the enemies' fire.

[3] He was king-designate of Poland: the messenger bearing the offer of the crown arrived a few hours later to find him dead. Basnage, ii. 220.

who still lay around the Tolhuis, to lay down their arms. They did so, but De Longueville, who had been drinking, suddenly cried to his companions, 'No quarter for these 'canaille! Kill! kill!' and, rushing upon them, shot one of their officers dead. The Dutch, stung to fury, seized their arms again, and fired. De Longueville fell dead, and with him the Marquis de Guitry, Master of the Wardrobe. Condé, rushing up to save his nephew, was shot in the hand and disabled for the rest of the campaign. The Dutch infantry were now massacred without mercy, with the exception of a few who yielded and some who fled to Schenkenschans. In dead and prisoners the Dutch lost 1,500 men that day.

Louis now came over himself, to distribute caresses and honours among the wounded dukes and marquises, and by the evening the infantry had all been brought over to the left bank. The Tolhuis, inside which lay about twenty men belonging to the garrison of Schenkenschans, surrendered without resistance.

Such was the 'passage du Rhin.' The more cool-headed even of the French judged it lightly. 'Two thousand 'horse cross to attack four or five hundred,'[1] said the Comte de Bussy Rabutin to Mme. de Sévigné. 'The two thousand 'are supported by a large army, where is the King in person, 'and the four or five hundred are troops already terrified by 'the brusque and vigorous manner in which the campaign 'has been begun. If the Dutch had had more firmness and 'courage in this encounter, they would only have killed a very 'few more men, and in the end they would have been over-'come by numbers. If the Prince of Orange had been on the 'other side of the Rhine with his army, I do not think we 'should have attempted to swim across in front of him.'

Lack of sufficient troops to hold the long river frontages had been as a nightmare to the Prince and Deputies since the Ijssel was first chosen for defence. Their fears had now

[1] There were about 2,000 Dutch on the left bank altogether, but those who actually charged the French cannot have been much more than 500.

received a terrible fulfilment, for the French occupied the Betuwe, and on the 13th were spread out along the road between Arnhem and Nijmegen. Schenkenschans was isolated. There was nothing for it but to break up the Ijssel army and march back with all speed to Utrecht, there to make a new line of defence, or, if that proved impossible, fall back on Holland itself, and trust to inundations to stay the progress of the enemy.

CHAPTER VIII

The Retreat to Holland and the French Advance, June 1672

The defence of Holland had now become a matter of the most pressing moment. De Witt reminded Van Beverningk on June 9 how he had 'for years and days been urging the 'provision of security for Holland in particular.' For ten years past, indeed, he had been foremost with plans which, for reasons of finance or provincial jealousy, had all been strangled at birth.

One such plan, which he had very much at heart, was the provision of a strong line of defence from the Zuyder Zee to the Lek, in the shape of a great fortified entrenchment. As early as 1662 a pamphlet appeared in the bookshops of Holland entitled 'The Interest of Holland,' and, in a later edition, 'Grounds and Maxims of Holland's Well-being.'[1] It bore the initials of Pieter de la Court, whose invectives in print against the House of Orange and the Orange party made him a valuable propagandist for the Government. The 'Interest' was mainly a statement of political doctrine, but in the fourteenth chapter two alternative 'lines' were proposed whereby Holland and Utrecht might be jointly protected against attack from the east. A great fortified canal should run from a point between Muiden and Muiderberg on the Zuyder Zee to Hinderdam on the Vecht, thence through the polders east of the river to the village of Overmeer, then to Utrecht, passing to the east of the city so as to encircle it, and finally by the 'Vaartsche Rijn' to the Lek at Vreeswijk. From the

[1] This well-known tract was translated into English. It was 'The pæan of Holland and Holland's independence.' (Japikse.)

sluices of such a canal inundations could be made simply and effectively. Alternatively, Amersfoort might be included in the scheme of defence by taking the ditch along the west side of the river Eem, east of Amersfoort, and then southwards to a point east of Wijk by Duurstede, which would thus share with Utrecht and Amersfoort the benefits of protection. Between Lek and Waal the line would be continued as far as Loevestein on the south bank of the latter river, opposite Gorinchem, while the river Meuse from Loevestein to Heusden would be strengthened by a line of forts.

The plan was never carried out, and the story of its failure is typical of the way in which the most vital schemes of national defence were sacrificed to provincial jealousy and parsimony, in spite of the continued efforts of individuals to bring about agreement.

On January 19, 1672 (ten years, it should be noted, after the appearance of De Witt's and De la Court's pamphlet), it was proposed in the States of Holland to strengthen the fortifications of the town of Naarden on the Zuyder Zee, and to deliberate with Utrecht on the creation of a fortified line from Hinderdam to Utrecht and so to the Lek.[1] Three Hollanders and three Deputies of Utrecht (including Van Zuylestein, William's cousin, and Van Dijkveld) were sent, with Field-Marshal Wirtz, to inspect the ground and make a report on it. Their report,[2] delivered on February 6, was the signal for the outbreak of serious differences of opinion between Utrecht and Holland on the subject of financial liabilities. The Commission recommended the formation of the 'Grebber' line, from the Grebbesluys on the Lek near Wageningen to the mouth of the Eems, thus protecting Amersfoort, and the fortification of the Vaartsche Rijn between Vreeswijk and Utrecht. The country on the east side of the Vecht between Utrecht and the Horstermeer was so low-lying

[1] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, p. 13; Van Sypestein en de Bordes, part ii, p. 9 *sqq.* Amsterdam had in 1666 prevented the fortification of Naarden for fear it might be used to threaten the city. Wagenaar, xiii. 361–2.

[2] Van Sypestein en de Bordes, Bijlagen vi and vii.

and boggy that it would be a simple matter to flood it and so make it quite impossible for an army to march across it. Utrecht and Amersfoort both needed re-fortification to put them into a reasonable state of defence. When these things were done, the Commissioners considered that Utrecht and Holland would be safe, provided, as they were careful to warn the States, that 'a large force' was sent to garrison the line.[1]

Holland and Utrecht discussed the scheme only to shelve it at the end of a month. Holland, who was responsible for the fortification of Naarden, as it lay within her territories, insisted that it should be paid for out of the funds to be voted by both provinces for making the Grebber line. In other words, she would only pay part of the cost. Utrecht refused to consent to the construction of the Grebber line unless the more westerly line from Vreeswyk and along the Vecht was first agreed upon. But the towns of Rhenen, Wyk-by-Duurstede and Amersfoort refused point-blank to contribute to the westerly line until the Grebber line, by which alone they would enjoy protection, was first made.

De Witt would not let the matter rest, even after the negotiations had broken down. When war was declared on the Republic by England and France he approached the Utrecht Deputy to the States-General, Van der Hoolck, and insisted that one or both of the lines must be begun at once. The Ijssel line was at best an uncertain hope on which to stake the safety of the States. There must be some strong barrier defending the 'home counties' to which the army could fall back. He recommended to Van der Hoolck the immediate construction of the Vecht line, to embrace Utrecht on the east and continue along the Vaart to Vreeswyk. The Grebber line could be made later, should time and circumstances permit.

To his delight, he succeeded in carrying with him the Deputies of Utrecht and Holland in the States-General. The

1 'They intend to draw a line from Utrecht to Naarden for the security of Holland, to be made good by Burghers amounting to 60,000 men.' J. Vernon, February 2, from the Hague. *Foreign News Letters*, 188. P.R.O.

States of Utrecht also gave their consent. The contract was made out and signed by both provinces on April 22, and the engineers went to inspect the ground. They reported the presence of many underground springs, whereby the cost of the work would be seriously increased. It was a fatal blow. The States of both provinces relegated the plan to the region of discarded resolutions whence it would never emerge. De Witt was bitterly disappointed and angry. He did not for a moment credit the excuses and objections which had been made. 'The work has been spoilt again through what 'are, in my opinion, quite erroneous reasons of jealousy,' he wrote to Van Beverningk on June 9.

His spirit, however, was undaunted and, as the news in the first week of June grew daily more grave, the more daring became his proposals for home defence. He had no power to command, but he poured out in his letters to Van Beverningk his hopes and fears, his trust in the God of battles, his plans for the future.

On June 9 he wrote as follows :

'My own thoughts in particular incline to this, that if, which God forefend, the enemy were to carry Nijmegen or to break through in some other place, we ought to establish the "sedem imperii" within Amsterdam, bring thither the Assemblies of their High Mightinesses and Their Noble Great Mightinesses (*i.e.* the States-General and the States of Holland) with the subordinate assemblies depending on them, and also all the supply of cannon, weapons, etc. So from that place, as from the heart, we should bring help and succour as far as possible to all the members, and, under the blessing of God, dispute the country with the enemy to the last man with a Batavian fortitude. . . . The Lord God has a hundred ways whereby to save us ; "quondam etiam victis redit in precordia virtus."'

This bold plan of making Amsterdam the capital met with some approval in the States of Holland, where it was discussed

on the 13th,[1] but other and less courageous counsels prevailed. It was proposed, and at last after many debates decided, that the States-General should be asked to send an embassy to England to seek conditions of peace, while a similar deputation should interview Louis himself. De Witt found it impossible to impress his 'Batavian fortitude' on the States-General, and the two embassies were despatched.[2] 'I can 'conceive no good result therefrom,' wrote De Witt to his brother on the 18th. Three days later he pointed out in a letter to his fellow-citizen, Vivien of Dordrecht, the real cause which was bringing the Republic low; 'I find our greatest 'evil lies not in the progress of the enemy, but in the general 'unrest, the disobedience of the burghers and inhabitants in 'the towns, and of the peasants in the country, whereby the 'power of the sovereign authority is as it were unnerved and 'all executive orders, if not absolutely held up, are at least very 'much delayed.'

Indeed, as the French advanced, and refugees from Utrecht poured into Amsterdam and Rotterdam, the townsfolk of Holland, both rich and poor, were seized with fear. The well-to-do merchants began to transfer their goods and businesses from Amsterdam to Hamburg.[3] Boats 'laden with 'truncks and costly goods' were stopped in the Hague and Rotterdam by the common people, who refused to let them pass out, 'pretending the great ones intend to follow after and 'leave the people to the mercy of the French.' The fall of town after town bred in the minds of wise men distrust and disappointment at a government which had 'no men or few 'raysed and the guarisons not half-manned,'[4] and in the minds of the more ignorant and hot-headed suspicion which soon grew into open defiance of authority. Wild rumours were abroad, as that the Catholics were 'hoping to wash their

[1] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, pp. 110–111.

[2] See further, chap. x below.

[3] Dutch news letters, quoted in Colenbrander's *Zeeoorlogen uit Vreemde Archeven*, ii. 128–9.

[4] Samuel Tucker, English merchant in Rotterdam, to Williamson, June 17, P.R.O., Holland, 189.

'hands in the hereticks' blood,' and even that 'the Prince of 'this country will goe over to the French.' To most people, however, the Prince was the one hope of salvation, and many ascribed the insufficient preparations to meet the enemy to the fears of a certain 'faction' in the Government that 'it 'would greaten or rayse him too much in case he had an army 'sufficient to gaine him honour in repulsing the French.' [1]

De Witt was not concerned to refute these accusations, though they soon obsessed the mind of the whole country. Twenty years of administrative responsibility had shown him the real weakness of the Dutch political system, and on that he laid the blame for the catastrophe which overwhelmed the Republic in 1672. When he appeared, on August 4, in the States of Holland to tender his resignation from an office in which he had become the best-hated man in Holland, he spoke of his baffled efforts for the safety of his dear country.

'With what application and urgent propositions I have exhorted and entreated the members of this assembly and the other provinces of the generality [to strengthen the State in general and the province of Holland in particular] the Notes of the members present, and their memoranda, can bear witness. Your Noble Great Mightinesses have taken all good care with such promptitude as has been possible in a body composed of so many members and of a constitution more wont to be moved by a persuasion of immediate and pressing necessity, than by a timely warning of trouble that is still in the future, though clearly foreseen. So it has pleased Almighty God in His wrath to suffer the State to be overcome by the disasters and calamities wherein the land is at present involved, and that too in a manner which is incomprehensible, and so suddenly and with so little resistance that posterity will have reason to find it incredible.'

[1] Samuel Tucker to Williamson, June 17, P.R.O., Holland, 189.

Thus did De Witt, in the hour of his utter defeat, pass sentence on the Dutch oligarchy. Not seldom in the tragedies of history the prisoner at the bar is in reality the judge. The crowd who trampled him to death believed him in very truth a traitor. The real traitor, as he well knew, was no one man, but the 'constitution,' whose servant he had been for twenty years, for whose blind provincialism he paid forfeit with his life.

The removal of the army from the Ijssel to some line of defence in Holland was being discussed by De Witt and Van Beverningk before June 12. De Witt held that Holland, who hitherto had borne so great a proportion of the cost of the war, and had kept back no regular troops for her own defence, but had even sent some of her own peasants to the Ijssel front, was worthy of every effort of salvation. 'It 'seems to me, if the work cannot be kept up outside the fron- 'tiers (of Holland) we must expend all our powers in saving 'ourselves, and that in such a dolorous situation the other 'provinces cannot be re-established save by the conservation 'of Holland and by the power which, later on, will possibly 'be available from Holland for their deliverance. But if 'Holland also is left defenceless and is consequently lost, there 'is obviously no resource for all the other provinces.' He therefore urged that, if the enemy broke through, the infantry 'after garrisoning the towns out there (on the Ijssel) . . . be 'embarked at Kampen and . . . disembarked in the province 'of Holland, and particularly at Muyden, whence they could 'be brought either into the province of Utrecht or further 'into Holland.'

When the news reached the Hague on the 12th of the fall of Groenlo and Rijnberk, De Witt judged that 'the affair out 'there is desperate,' and the time had come to retreat. It has been seen that he contemplated leaving some troops as garrisons, especially in Kampen. He was, however, insistent in his letter of the 12th that 'the main part of the army, with

'the generals, should go into Holland and a large part of the 'cavalry to the frontiers of Brabant, which cover Holland and 'Zeeland.'

Van Beverningk was equally anxious to be back again in Holland. He judged the Ijssel towns unable to hold out for more than three or four days, while on the inner side (that is, on the side facing the Ijssel) they had no defences at all. People were already flying from Zutfen, and the town would, he felt sure, yield on the first approach of the enemy.

In face of De Witt's advice, and Van Beverningk's opinion of the indefensibility of the Ijssel towns, it is astonishing to find that when the Ijssel army broke up—as it did on June 13—no less than 13,000 men were left to defend the Ijssel, leaving only 9,000 to march back to the defence of Utrecht and Holland. The Deputies had met in haste at Zutfen on the evening of June 12, as soon as the news of the disaster at the Tolhuis reached the army. That the army must retreat at once was no longer a matter of doubt. The French might at any moment cross the Rhine again above or below Arnhem. If they did so, the little Dutch army would be caught between Turenne on the west and Luxembourg and the Bishop of Münster on the east, and in all probability annihilated. Indeed, the danger was so great that it might even now be impossible to reach Holland. In the meeting at Zutfen it is undeniable that provincial fears, jealousies and prejudices triumphed over sound military policy and patriotic endeavour. The Field Deputies representing Friesland, Groningen, Overijssel and Gelderland insisted that almost all their own regiments must remain available for use in their respective provinces.[1] Seven regiments of foot, and fourteen small Dutch cavalry regiments were all that the Deputies—made foolish by fear—would set free from a position which would with absolute certainty be overwhelmed by the French

[1] 'Chacque Province redemande ce qu'elle paye pour l'employer à sa défense.' Louvois to Le Tellier, June 20, 1672, Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i. p. 221. The infantry regiments of Counts Solms and Stirum belonged to Gelderland; the cavalry of Kingma to Friesland; these went with the retreating army.

in three or four days. De Witt, writing to his brother on June 20, estimated the whole force at about 5,000 cavalry and between 3,000 and 4,000 foot.

Van Beverningk never commented on this crazy division of forces. William, who might have exerted a wise influence, was most unfortunately absent from the meeting at which the decision was taken. He was at Arnhem on the 12th, collecting the remains of Wirtz's troops after their defeat on the Rhine banks; and the Deputies did not seek his advice, or that of the other generals, until the evening of the same day.[1] It was then too late to make any important alterations. Westerloo's regiment of Spanish infantry alone was rescued from remaining behind in Doesburg, and was transferred to the retreating army. Kampen, the only town which De Witt thought worth defending, because of its position on the Zuyder Zee, was left with only four companies of cavalry, while each of the other Ijssel towns had two infantry regiments, besides two or three hundred horse.

The army broke up on the 13th, and made a forced march to Utrecht, where it arrived on the 15th, having picked up 2,000 Spanish cavalry auxiliaries under the Marquis of Louvignies at Rhenen. It encamped along the Daal Dyke, the road to the west of the city, where the Merwede Canal now runs. The smaller cannon from Zutfen and Deventer were shipped off to Amsterdam from Kampen. The 'women and canaille' of Zutfen laid hands on seven pieces of artillery, and succeeded in retaining five in spite of all the officer and men in charge could do. The field cannon were sent to Utrecht by road.[2]

Had Louis followed the advice of Condé after the crossing of the Rhine, he would have at once entered the heart of

[1] Letters of the Deputies to the States-General, June 12, De Jonge, ii. p. 460, and of Van Beverningk to De Witt, June 13.

[2] Van Beverningk to the States of Holland, June 16: Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part i. p. 73. n. 2.

the country by crossing the Rhine again below Arnhem, and pressed forward swiftly to Amsterdam, before the spread of inundations made the roads impassable. The retreating Dutch army could have been overwhelmed with the greatest ease, and none of the great cities of Holland were fortified or garrisoned. The small garrisons left behind in the Ijssel towns were incapable of hindering the immense French force, had it chosen to pass them by, and in any case Louis had such unlimited troops at his command that he could easily have proceeded with the conquest of Holland without neglecting to 'clear up' the Ijssel.

Condé, however, lay wounded at Emmerik; Turenne, who shared the opinion of his great colleague that Holland should be immediately invaded, was sworn enemy to Louvois, the chief guide of the King's counsels. To Louvois it seemed good that every town in Gelderland and Overijssel should be besieged and taken in form, and occupied by a French garrison. Accordingly, Turenne was ordered to lay bridges across the Rhine above and below Arnhem, and to invest the town. It surrendered on June 16.[1] On the same day the garrison of Knodsenburg, the small fort on the southern shore of the Betuwe, opposite Nijmegen, laid down its arms almost as soon as Turenne opened the trenches. Nijmegen still held out and refused to surrender to the cannon-fire from the further shore. Turenne then proceeded to invest Schenkenschans [2] from the land-side and also from the east, where the dried-up Rhine was no longer an obstacle, and cannonaded the walls with a heavy fire. The fortress was commanded by a young and nervous captain, Ten Hove, son of a burgomaster of Nijmegen, whose influence had procured the post for him. The best officer, Colonel Turck, whom William had sent thither, had perished at the Tolhuis with about 150

[1] 'We hardly got out of it in time,' wrote Van Beverningk on June 14, from Rhenen.

[2] Louis described Schenkenschans as 'd'une conséquence extrême pour ouvrir le Wahal et le Rhin . . . et pour me mettre en état d'attaquer Nimègue.' *Mémoire de Louis XIV*; Rousset, *Vie de Louvois*, i. Appendix.

men of the garrison. Ten Hove complained of bad fortifications and insufficient supplies. His men were mutinous for lack of pay. Probably because he wished to end the siege quickly he had dismissed the two armed boats on the Waal which could have prevented Turenne from opening works on the Waal side of the fortress. The 'impregnable' fortress gave itself up on June 21 before one of its defenders had been so much as wounded. The garrison were allowed to depart to Friesland.[1]

Louis meanwhile, with his brother the Duc d'Orléans, sat down before Doesburg and Zutfen. The former surrendered on the 21st, the latter on the 25th.[2] Deventer, of which the Dutch had better hopes,[3] was summoned on the 19th by the Bishop of Münster, to swear allegiance to the Empire under the protection of the Bishop. Inside the town Orange populace and anti-Orange magistrates were at daggers drawn. The trumpeter on the tower was forbidden to play the 'Wilhelmus.' The burgher guard themselves sallied out from the gate and repulsed the enemy. But the magistrates, terrified by the continual bombardment which was battering the city, decided, on June 20, by a majority of five to three to accept the Bishop's terms of surrender, which included a heavy fine of 65,000 florins. The other towns of Overijssel were not long in following Deventer's example. In some cases, as in that of Zwolle, the garrisons refused to capitulate when the towns entered into negotiation with the enemy, and marched out of their own accord. Colonel Bampfield succeeded in this way in rejoining the Dutch army in Holland.

Louis, after entering Doesburg, crossed the Ijssel, and surveyed the dreary miles of abandoned trenches, with the

[1] See Sylvius, *Vervolg aan Aitzema*, i. I. pp. 257–8.

[2] The Burghers of Doesburg 'would not hold out for fear of being plundered.' Godolphin to Arlington from the French camp, June 23, S.P. France, 134. P.R.O. 'Zutfen began to capitulate on the first sight of French squadrons.' Letter to Sir J. Williamson from Paris, June 25.

[3] As appears from Van Beverningk's letter of June 12 to De Witt.

beach of the river abnormally exposed by drought in front of them. He was disappointed that William had retreated, and felt some mortification ' with regard to my own glory, because ' if he had stayed on the Ijssel, I hoped to fight him and perhaps ' entirely defeat his army.' He had, however, consoled himself by a series of prosperous sieges, at all of which, thanks to his own preparations and ' les soins du marquis de Louvois,' nothing was lacking to his satisfaction.[1] Now that the fortresses in the Betuwe—Kuilenburg, on the Lek, Buuren in the centre and Tiel on the Waal below Nijmegen—had joined the long list of fallen cities, the moment had come for a triumphant march forward to Utrecht.

The great central city of the Republic lay undefended. The story of its abandonment reveals the almost incredible state of panic and cowardice to which both the magistrates and townsfolk of the once defiant Republic had been reduced. On June 15, the burghers rose and seized the keys of the town. They refused to admit the Dutch army, in whole or in part. It is probable that a bad reputation for plunder had preceded it, for Rochefort, writing to Louis from Amersfoort on June 20, said: ' I have met the inhabitants of those parts in ' coaches with fine horses, saying they have nothing more to ' fear. We indeed behave in a very orderly manner, and the ' Dutch troops pillage a great deal.' [2] Not only that, but since the crossing of the Rhine, Utrecht had been overwhelmed with refugees from the country, who in their turn worked on the nerves of the populace, until all self-control and sense left them. An inhabitant of the neighbouring town of Woerden visited the city on the 13th, before the arrival of the army before the gates, and ' found that pleasant and lovely ' town full of confusion, fright and amazement.' [3]

When William demanded admittance, the people on their own responsibility wrote to the Utrecht Deputies in the States-

[1] *Mémoire de Louis XIV*, Rousset, *Vie de Louvois*, i. Appendix.
[2] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i. Unfortunately the French did not maintain their good standard of discipline. See Stoppa to Louvois, *ibid.* pp. 124–5.
[3] Costerus: *Historisch Verhael.*

D'Inhaling van syn Konincklicke Hoogheyt
Oranje VOET. trekt vrolijk heen,
Dock bevryt en helpen voort syn Kerk,
Ick zucht na een gewenschte vervanginge
En wert Prins WILLEM in syn hoven

The Entrance of William III. into Utrecht, 1672.

From a contemporary print in the Fitz William Museum, Cambridge.

General saying that the city would on no account admit a garrison. They regarded the French army as invincible; resistance would only bring ruin and massacre on the city. The States of Holland sent a special deputation to the army to confer with the Prince and Field Deputies as to what was to be done.[1] They found all in confusion—William himself was refused admission, and the town seemed determined to keep its gates shut to the army. The deputation returned to the Hague, and dwelt in their report to the States-General on the virtual impossibility of defending so refractory a town. They had been forced to enter and leave the town in secret for fear the citizens should discover the object of their mission. The members for Holland seized the opportunity to press for the immediate withdrawal of the army into Holland. In vain the Utrecht Deputies pointed out that the people could be as easily calmed as excited, and that as yet no indication of an unwilling spirit in the City Magistracy had been detected. They pleaded that they should wait for more official information from the government of the city. But they were overruled. Holland succeeded in passing a resolution ordering the army to come into Holland and stay there 'without sending troops to 'any garrison, unless absolute necessity demands otherwise.'[2]

These orders reached Van Beverningk and William while they were in Utrecht conferring with the Magistracy on the best means of defending the town. William had been admitted at last alone, without the army, on the evening of June 16, and was loudly cheered by the people. The last time he had entered the city was in 1661, an orphan seemingly without a future, save such as the wild acclamations of the people prophesied for him. He had lost nothing of his personal popularity, though his admirers would have none of the protection he came to offer them. He and Van Beverningk wrestled for hours with the Magistrates, who were in

[1] Its members were Hop of Amsterdam, van Slingelandt of Dordrecht, and van Sevender, all Hollanders. See Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, p. 112. See also *Kronijk*, Historisch Genootschap, 1868, p. 288. '*Bijlage bij het Verhaal van het Gebeurde bij de Overgave der stad Utrecht in* 1672.'

[2] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 13, n. 1.

wholesome dread of their subjects the people. While the argument was still going on, Van Beverningk found time to write to the States of Holland: 'If the town will not admit 'a garrison, we shall break up our camp to-morrow.' As he wrote these words the new orders arrived from the States-General. He was loath to give up the town. 'If,' he added, 'this city should behave reasonably, I trust that the intention 'of Their High Mightinesses is that we should not abandon 'it until greater necessity arises.' And in a postscript he added: 'After many debates and contentions, the Government of the 'City have declared that they will risk all on the defence.' [1]

When the Prince and Van Beverningk returned to the army, they found the other Field Deputies unwilling to support them in defending the town. They refused to take any decision until further orders had come from the Hague. William went again into Utrecht on the 17th and demanded the burning down of some suburbs which would otherwise hinder the defence. The Magistrates demurred, and proposed instead some inundations from the Lek. In the afternoon of the same day, the three Deputies of the States-General who had visited the army on the 14th returned, for the very purpose of insisting on the resolution of the 16th, that the army must withdraw to Holland. In vain the magistrates of Utrecht expostulated and complained of being overruled and bullied by Holland. The delegates from the States-General insisted that the army must retreat to Holland. They cannot be acquitted of twisting the Resolution of the 16th to suit their own wishes, for they knew well enough that it had only been taken under the impression that Utrecht was refusing to receive a garrison. Van Beverningk, as we have seen, interpreted it more freely.

The camp broke up, and as it did so, came more contradictory orders. At 8 A.M. on June 18, an express from the States-General empowered the Deputies in the Field 'to do 'or leave undone that which they judge best for the service

[1] De Jonge, *op. cit.* ii. p. 472–3.

'of the State.' De Witt had read aloud to the Assembly the letter which Van Beverningk had written on the 16th in the intervals of arguing with the Utrecht Magistrates. The States could not ignore the postscript. They still refused to give any definite order for defending the city, though the Utrecht Deputies tried to obtain one 'in clear and ample 'terms.' The burden of responsibility was thrown entirely on William and the Deputies. The influence of the three delegates with the Deputies in the Field was such that a return to Utrecht was hardly contemplated. Utrecht was abandoned, and the army made its way with all speed to the 'five posts' chosen for defence on the borders of Holland.[1]

The whole episode is an all too vivid illustration of the hopeless system of army command and responsibility. Neither the States-General nor the Deputies in the Field knew exactly what they wanted, and William, who, given a free hand, might have organised a good defence, with the help of inundations, was obliged to act on orders whose value had altered completely by the time they arrived on the scene of their execution. It is of course highly doubtful whether a prolonged defence of Utrecht could have been maintained. The populace were apt to be seized with panic which might have affected the army. The Town Government would almost certainly have quarrelled with the Deputies and Generals on military questions. Yet to abandon so great a city, with its central position and command of so many roads and waterways into Holland, was a terrible acknowledgment of defeat. 'D'être assuré 'd'Utrecht est la plus capitale chose du monde,' thought Turenne,[2] and William knew well enough what sort of use

[1] The account given by the Vrouw van Amerongen to her husband of the affair shows that, in the opinion of well-informed contemporaries, the Prince had done his utmost to defend the town. 'His Highness has so prevailed with the inhabitants that they were agreed to receive three or four regiments into the town, and to defend it themselves; then there came immediately afterwards an order from the States-General that we should abandon Utrecht and gather the whole army on the frontiers of Holland, which has been done.' Vrouw van Amerongen to Godard Heer van Amerongen, June 20, 1672. From the private archives of Count Bentinck at Amerongen.

[2] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i. p. 655.

the great commander would make of it. From Utrecht he would hold both Amsterdam and Leiden in fear of attack, and their safety would depend on the swiftness and effectiveness with which inundations could be spread over the low polderlands on the eastern borders of Holland.

No sooner had the Dutch left the neighbourhood of Utrecht than the government of the city sent a deputation to Doesburg to arrange terms of surrender with the King. The Duc de Rochefort, who was occupying the towns of the Veluwe as quickly as the Dutch left them, wrote on June 20 from Amersfoot: 'The people of Utrecht await your Majesty 'with impatience. It is a moment we cannot afford to lose; 'I know it from all the burghers of this place who belong to 'the same body (*i.e.* the States of Utrecht); the governors of 'this country are so easy to deal with that we only need a little 'audacity to finish everything.' He did not exaggerate. On June 23 he himself entered Utrecht in advance of the King, and received the keys of the town. The Province submitted entirely to Louis's mercy, and henceforward acknowledged him as sovereign. Louis delayed his arrival until July 3, when he entered his new capital in a manner becoming to the Roy Soleil.[1]

The capture of Utrecht sealed the conquest of the three provinces of Utrecht, Gelderland and Overijssel. Henceforward for two years to come they were cut off from the Government at the Hague and became in name and in fact, French territory. All intercourse with Holland ceased.[2] The towns bought security of life and property for their citizens; the local governments continued to exist, though entirely under French influence.[3] In most of these eastern and central

[1] Sylvius, *Vervolg aan Aitzema*, i. p. 308–9.

[2] 'To-day a yacht which came from Utrecht has been kept back (at Amsterdam).' Vrouw van Amerongen to her husband, June 28, 1672.

[3] 'Vous devez faire entendre tout doucement aux Etats d'Utrecht qu'il ne 'faut pas qu'ils s'assemblent sans votre permission; et que quand ils le feront 'vous prétendez avoir un homme parmi eux pour être témoin de ce qui s'y 'passera': Louvois to Luxembourg, July 4, 1672. Griffet *Recueil de Lettres*, i. p. 228.

towns there was a considerable element of Roman Catholics among the population. It was not an age of religious heroism in the Republic; those old fires had died down in the century of prosperity and immunity from foreign persecution which followed the wars of William the Silent. Louis met with no opposition when he re-established the ancient worship in the churches of his new territories. The promise given in the articles of the capitulation of Utrecht that 'the exercise of the 'Reformed religion shall remain undisturbed,' was openly and immediately broken in Utrecht, the seat of a former bishopric. The city quickly became the scene of an energetic counter-reformation. The Cardinal de Bouillon himself celebrated the first mass in the Domkerk on July 9. The pulpit, in expiation of the many Calvinist sermons that had been preached from it, was ceremonially scourged and removed, together with all the seats, to be burnt as heretics. The titular bishop 'in partibus infidelium' was reinstated with much pomp.[1] Sometimes the Protestant inhabitants suffered at the hands of their Catholic fellow-citizens. Nijmegen was quickly flooded with monks and priests, and the mob set upon some who refused to salute the Host as it was carried through the streets.[2] But there was no systematic persecution, no massacring and burning on a large scale, though Louvois threatened stern measures to all who refused submission. Louis meant to acquire a new possession as well as destroy a rival, and he had the sense not to copy the methods of Philip II and Alva. The people felt the ills of conquest in other ways—in crushing taxes, fines for absence, the forced quartering of soldiers in their houses,[3] the pillaging of the countryside.

Before long the French occupation of Utrecht had reduced the province to poverty and exasperation. Heavy taxation for the support of the troops, combined with unbridled and ceaseless

[1] *Aanteekeningen, betreffende het voorgevallene in de maanden Juli to December* 1672, Historish Genootschap te Utrecht, *Kronijk*, 1868, p. 440.

[2] Basnage, ii.

[3] 'The Burghers do nothing but sigh and groan over the heavy burden of 'quarters': Vrouw van Amerongen to her husband, September 20, 1672.

pillaging in town and country, destroyed whatever hopes the inhabitants had ever had of the French rule. The wisest of the French strongly condemned, while they saw little hope of stopping the licence of the soldiers. Stoppa, one of Louvois' agents in Utrecht, wrote in September to his chief, saying that the States were unable to pay the taxes required of them because the entire district had been desolated by the troops. 'I much regret to be obliged to tell you,' said this honest man, 'that the complaints in this respect are but too true . . . All 'the peasants were brought back to their villages, but it seems 'it was but to pillage them of the few goods and cattle they 'had preserved; in a word, to strip them utterly.'[1] Those who had fled with goods and money to Amsterdam were lucky, and the number of refugees continued to increase, in spite of the threats issued against all such 'émigrés.' Since officers as well as men joined in the pillaging, Luxembourg was unable to check it until it had exhausted itself. The Roman Catholic population did not respond to the invitation to throw in their lot with the French crusaders. The local priests even refused to assist in the services in the Domkerk at Utrecht. Luxembourg did not flatter Louvois—whom he did not love—with false accounts of the temper of the King's new provinces. 'They are very ill inclined to the service of the King,' he said, 'and do not wish to be under his domination.'

[1] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, p. 124.

CHAPTER IX

The Inundations and the Five Posts, June–July 1672

The Dutch army had abandoned Utrecht. Hitherto its fortunes had steadily declined, nor did it seem likely that they would now begin to mend. Yet, in spite of insufficient numbers, bad pay, bad equipment, fears, desertions and privations of every kind, which were to continue for many weeks to come—in spite, too, of political upheavals, amounting almost to revolution, the tide had turned and the limit to Louis's conquests had been set. An army of 9,000 men, divided between five widely separated posts which were strung out from the Zuyder Zee to the Waal, commanded by a committee of civilians and a boy of one-and-twenty, was scarcely a hopeful instrument with which to save Holland from conquest and destruction. Safety came from another quarter, as it had come a hundred years before, when the Spaniards were laying siege to Leiden. The peculiar geographical formation and river system of the Province of Holland enabled the Dutch, by an infinitely elaborate system of inundations, to fill up the gaps between their military posts, so that, in open weather, no enemy could penetrate beyond this water barrier. For close on two years the French were held at bay by this combined opposition of troops and waters; it baffled their every attempt at advance, and at length set William free to create diversions on such a scale that the vast incubus of the French army of occupation was forced to abandon its conquests and gradually to release its hold on Utrecht and Gelderland. But in June 1672 no vision of deliverance, soon or late, flattered the imagination of the

Government or the generals. The question of immediate respite was urgent, and the only plans which could be made were those of strictly practical value.

The army was divided so as to command the various waterways and main roads (which followed the rivers) into Holland.[1] Holland is a delta country, and is divided into sections by the four roughly parallel branches of the Rhine.

The names of these branches, beginning at the most northerly, are: the Oude Rijn, flowing from Utrecht, through Leiden to the sea at Katwijk; the Holland Ijssel, simply a loop of the Lek, leaving it below Vianen and joining it again just above Rotterdam; the Lek itself, that great arm that flows past Arnhem and Rhenen, until it mingles with the Merwede branch of the Waal, and together they flow out past Rotterdam and Schiedam into the sea; and, most southerly of all, the Waal, which receives into itself the true Meuse at Woudrichem, and, changing its name first to Merwede and then to Maas, streams out to sea past Dordrecht and the Briel.

To Gorinchem on the Waal, the most southerly of the 'five posts,' came Field-Marshal Wirtz on June 19 with about 2,700 men. Not Gorinchem alone, but Woudrichem and Loevestein on the opposite bank, Dordrecht, 's Hertogenbosch, and the yet unconquered forts of Bommel on the Waal and Crèvecœur on the Meuse, required and received additions to their garrisons from his scanty force.[2]

At Schoonhoven, on the north bank of the Lek, Louvignies arrived on June 18 with 500 Spanish infantry and about 1,000 Dutch and Spanish cavalry. On the maintenance of that little town depended to a large extent the safety of Rotterdam and Dordrecht.[3]

The post on the Holland Ijssel was simply a sluice called

[1] The division of the army was decided before the gates of Utrecht, just before the camp broke up, by William and the Deputies in the field, in the presence of the Delegates from the States-General.

[2] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 48.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 59.

the Goede-jan-Verwelle Sluis, half-way between Oudewater and Gouda. Hither the Count of Hoorn was sent with a tiny force of 1,300 men, with the French close at his heels. The French occupied Oudewater on June 25 (the village, in common with Woerden, Naarden and a number of others, preferred to make terms with the enemy rather than receive a Dutch garrison and prepare for a defence), but evacuated it again on July 11, upon which Hoorn put a few troops into it.[1]

On the great main thoroughfare from Utrecht to Leiden and the Hague, William himself took up his position on June 18, with 1,400 Dutch infantry, and rather more than 2,000 cavalry, of whom a few were Spanish. With him was Van Beverningk. The post chosen was the Nieuwerbrug (New Bridge) on the Oude Rijn, where the great Wierikken canal joins the river from the south. The nearest village was Bodegraven, farther down the river, and from Bodegraven William dated his letters. The Nieuwerbrug was a more defensible post than the small town of Woerden, an hour's march further up the Rijn. William visited Woerden on his way from Utrecht, in order to examine its possibilities of defence. He called for a map, and an official of Woerden pointed out the advantages of Nieuwerbrug and Bodegraven. Nieuwerbrug was a small post, easily maintained by a few troops, and was also a better centre from which to inundate the surrounding country. Woerden, in common with most other small towns, was unfortified, unprovisioned and quite unfit to stand anything in the nature of a siege. The Prince swiftly made up his mind and gave orders for the march to Nieuwerbrug, and when some of the magistrates complained of being thus abandoned, he shrugged his shoulders and told them to make what terms they could with the French.[2]

The fifth and last military post was the castle and town of Muiden on the Zuyder Zee. The protection of Amsterdam was, of course, of the first importance, and the story of the occupation of Muiden by the Dutch shows the fearfully narrow

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 65. [2] Costerus, *Historisch Verhael.*

margin by which the *cor cordium*—the very nerve-centre of the Republic—was saved from almost inevitable destruction.

Immediately after the break-up of the Ijssel army, a body of some 1,800 French cavalry, under the Duc de Rochefort, overran the Veluwe (the high ground between the Rhine and the Zuyder Zee) and entered each town as conquerors on the heels of the retreating Dutch. In this manner fell Wageningen, Rhenen, and Wijk-bij-Duurstede ; Amersfoort, on the edge of the high ground overlooking the descent to the Zuyder Zee, was entered by Rochefort on the 18th. Thence he sent 150 cavalry to Naarden, a little fortified town on the coast of the Zuyder Zee, lying within the borders of Holland. The magistrates of Naarden yielded at once to the French and gave orders to the garrison to depart at once to Muiden, six miles farther west along the coast towards Amsterdam. They made their way thither ' in a great mist,' weaponless, for the Naarden magistrates had deprived them of their arms in case they should plunge the town ' in a blood-bath ' by resisting the French.[1] Rochefort would have done well if he had at once followed them and secured Muiden, both town and castle. He did not know that from Muiden he could easily gain control of the sluices on the river Vecht, whereby the inundations made for the protection of Amsterdam could be drained off and the way to the city opened.[2] This important information was conveyed to Louis just too late by the Comte D'Estrades, late Ambassador to the States-General, in a letter from Wezel, written on June 18. The possession of Muiden, D'Estrades pointed out, would practically ensure the capture of Amsterdam. Rochefort knew nothing of this and intended to occupy only the castle at Muiden, which lay at the extreme end of the river Vecht, where it enters the Zuyder Zee.[3] An old

[1] Van Sypestein en de Bordes, part ii. p. 136, n. (letter from the government of Amsterdam).

[2] Actually the sluices were further up the river at Uitermeer and Hinderdam, but if Muiden were occupied by the French, they would quickly find out their whereabouts and seize them.

[3] ' La ville ne se peut garder mais le château est bon, à deux petites heures d'Amsterdam ' : Rochefort to Louis, June 18 ; Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i.

tradition tells how four Frenchmen, galloping out from Naarden to explore, were offered the keys of the town of Muiden by the magistrates, who thought they were sent in advance of the army, and how, when they approached the castle, a gallant serving-maid shut the gates and raised the drawbridge in their faces. They returned to Naarden and, immediately after, Prince Maurice arrived in hot haste and in the nick of time, with a strong body of some 2,000 men. Most of these were cavalry and, besides Muiden, they had to occupy and defend the sluices at Hinderdam and Uitermeer. Three hundred Spanish cavalry were immediately sent to secure Hinderdam, and the all-important line of the Vecht was thus snatched from under the very eyes of the enemy.

Louis, when he wrote his memoir of the campaign in 1674, treated the information given by D'Estrades as though it had emanated from himself. He even says that he had given Rochefort orders to seize Muiden and the sluices of the Vecht, whereas actually both Louis and his generals were then entirely ignorant of the importance of Muiden, and Rochefort only had orders to take Amersfoort and worry the retreating army of the Prince of Orange. On June 20, after occupying Naarden, he had fully carried out all his orders and had nothing more to do. 'My cavalry,' he wrote on June 20, 'and I are at present 'useless, having executed what His Majesty had commanded, 'and a little more.' [1] The 'little more' was the occupation of Naarden. So steeped was Louis in flattery that his own mind could no longer distinguish between what was true and what he wished to have been true.

The little Dutch army was now spread out along the whole eastern border of Holland, and the work now was to link up post to post by systematic and thorough inundation.

Before entering upon a description of the difficulties which beset this extraordinary undertaking, it is necessary to

[1] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i. p. 50.

point out a few of the geographical features which made its execution possible.

It has been mentioned that the country in the centre of the United Provinces, between the Rhine and the Zuyder Zee, is a country of sandy, heathy hills. In height these 'Dutch 'mountains' seldom reach more than 300 feet. Below the western edge of this plateau lies Utrecht, on ground already flat again, and from Utrecht westward to the coast the country gradually sinks in level, until the lands behind the barrier of dunes which stretch along the entire coast of Holland is as much as from one to two metres below A.P. (*i.e.* 'Amster-'damsch Peil'), the medium height of the North Sea tides. The district south of Amsterdam (Amstelland) lies lower than low-water mark in the Zuyder Zee at Muiden. The lands beside the great rivers Waal and Lek, and the lesser streams of Linge, Holland Ijssel and Vecht lie below middle tide—for the tides are felt in these streams for many miles inland. In 1672 the Linge was tidal far above Gorinchem, and the Ijssel above Montfoort.

A mighty chain of sand-dunes stretches from the Hoek of Holland to a point north-east of Alkmaar. Thence to the land's end a huge sea-wall protects the country from the tides of the North Sea. Similar walls or dykes run round the entire coast-line of the Zuyder Zee, where there are no dunes, and along the tidal rivers for great distances inland.

Besides the big 'outer rivers' (the Waal, Lek and Holland Ijssel) Holland is drained by a network of lesser streams, the Vecht, already mentioned, the Amstel at whose mouth lies Amsterdam, the Oude Rijn running from Utrecht through Leiden to the sea, the Gouwe, the Schie, the Rotte and many more, all running out of or into the bigger rivers. There are besides artificial canals. The land in between these water-courses would be useless marsh if it had not been walled off from the surrounding streams and drained by ditches which collect the rain and snow. The water in these ditches, when it rises above a certain height, is pumped into the neighbouring

river or canal by the little windmills that have been so familiar in Dutch landscapes from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries. Thus the land is dried and sinks in level, while the level in the walled-off watercourse ('boezemwater' or storage water) is correspondingly raised. These waters are, in their turn, passed on into the tidal rivers at low tide, or, as in the case of the Vecht and Amstel, straight into the Zuyder Zee. A piece of land thus drained is called a polder. So the whole of the province of Holland, and the western portion of Utrecht, has been reclaimed and turned into green pasture where the black and white cattle feed, or, in the 'Westland' around Rotterdam, into the fertile market garden country of vegetables and fruit, or, around Haarlem, into the bulb fields. By the middle of the seventeenth century, Holland looked much as it does now—a green, hedgeless plain, divided by canals and ditches with roads running along the river dykes and along the walls separating one polder from another, but seldom, or never, through the grass lands or polders themselves which were and are the domain of the peasant and his cattle to the exclusion of the public. The frequent villages lie, for the most part, on some more or less artificial heights beside a road or waterway.

It is obvious that to reverse the process of polder-making must produce inundation. By piercing the walls and dykes along a particular set of water-courses, the adjoining polders can be covered with water. The water-courses thus emptied can be filled again by opening the sluices into some 'outer 'river'—Lek, Ijssel or Waal—at high tide, or in certain districts, as around Muiden and the Vecht, by opening a sea sluice. The inundations, to be an effective defence against an invading army, must be so deep as to cover the lower roadways that ran between the polders and along all but the highest river dykes. Such roadways were from two to four feet above the ground level, and thus did not reach the water level A.P. The few higher roads which remained along the big rivers or the sea could be protected by military posts or forts, and the

'five posts' were chosen by William and the Deputies for this very purpose, as well as for the better control of inundations and the conservation of such towns as Muiden, Gouda and Gorinchem.

The States of Holland were preparing for the inundation of their country long before Louis so much as approached the frontiers of the Republic. A commission of inquiry was set up early in April to report on the possibilities of making the land inaccessible to invaders. Their enquiries were minute and prolonged in all the various polder districts of Holland—Rijnland, Delfland, Schieland, Altena, etc.—and they did not deliver their reports until the last days of May and the first of June. By this time news from the Ijssel front was so alarming that the States determined to proceed with the inundations as fast as the jealous and unwilling tempers of the peasantry, and in some cases of the towns, would permit. Deputies were appointed to direct and hasten the inundations in each district, and on June 11 the Deputies Meerman, Halling and Geelvinck were made inspectors of the whole undertaking. They were to see that the inundations were linked one with another 'so that no hole or corner remain open to the enemy 'anywhere, that could enable them to push into the heart of 'this province.' All sluices were to be fortified, the trees along the roads must be cut down so as to block advance if inundations failed. Orders were given on the 12th that inside the borders of the province of Utrecht sluices were to be opened and forts built wherever such measures were deemed necessary for the safety of Holland. The governments of the great cities—Leiden, Gouda, Rotterdam—were ordered to furnish the Deputies with all necessaries and to co-operate with them unceasingly.[1]

The ordering of the work on paper was vigorous and business-like enough, but the Deputies, in carrying out their

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. pp. 26–39.

instructions, met with such difficulties and such opposition that, by the time the army arrived on the borders of Holland, very little had been accomplished, and the inundations had at last to be completed by military force.

The difficulties in every district, from the Merwede to the Zuyder Zee, were of the same nature—opposition, from the peasants strenuous, from the towns less open but none the less exasperating. A few glimpses here and there are enough.

Between the Lek and the Merwede a committee of Deputies were endeavouring to set the country under water so as to surround and protect the town of Gorinchem. The dykes along the rivers Merwede, Lek and Linge, were to be pierced. The peasants of the countryside, on this threat to their lands, rose in open revolt, occupied the gates of Gorinchem itself with arms in their hands, kept watch on the dykes and roads, and, as there were no troops or militia in the district sufficient to overawe them, paid small heed to the threats of the baffled Deputies. The arming of the peasantry, so carefully carried out by the States, was having most unwelcome consequences.

On June 19, Marshal Wirtz arrived with about 2,700 men in the town. Under him order was restored and the sluices opened. But even so delays and opposition continued. 'On 'account of the interests of one and another in the matter,' he wrote, on June 25, 'the right methods have not been 'employed.' No sooner were the polders north-east of Gorinchem between Lek and Linge flooded, than the peasants secretly drained them off again at the next low tide in the Lek. They worked so cunningly that Wirtz could not get even with them and by July he was at his wit's end. He threatened to flood all Alblasserwaard, to the west of Gorinchem, which had hitherto been preserved as a feeding-ground for cattle and horses. The peasants begged that the southern part of it, along the Merwede, at least might be spared. He agreed, but when it appeared that they were secretly draining the water from the northern polders along the Lek, he lost patience and made several cuts in the Merwede dyke itself. On July 12 he wrote

a long letter to the States of Holland, giving a vivid account of his difficulties.

'The land which is under water one day is often scarcely wet by the next morning, although the water is still running into it from the opened sluices and cuttings. There can be no other cause for this than the great cunning of the peasants, which comes near to downright treachery, for thereby the water is drained off again by various methods and in ways unknown to me. I am, therefore, pretty well convinced that our ill-success arises not from lack of letting in the water, but from the draining it off again. . . . I must declare to Your Noble Great Mightinesses that I cannot make out these secret "menées," and also as far as I am concerned can do no more for the inundations nor can be any way responsible.'

He asked that the direction of the affair might be handed over to the Deputies in charge of the district, and he himself discharged from further responsibility. Not until the Prince of Orange issued a 'plakkaet' threatening all who interfered with the inundations with immediate death, was there a cessation in the activities of the peasants.[1] Luxembourg himself was not more baffling or more implacable than the countrymen whose livelihoods were threatened, and whose knowledge of the intricacies of that strange countryside was far superior to that of Wirtz and his officers, who had no experience in flood warfare. The States of Holland would have been well advised to give the commanding officer in each district full powers of life and death over the peasantry as soon as he arrived at his headquarters. Many precious days were lost, many dykes vainly cut, tempers frayed and energy wasted, before the concentration of power in the hands of the Prince brought some unity into the direction of affairs. The States of Holland indeed kept a jealous hand on every detail of the work of inundation. Their Commission of

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. pp. 42–46.

Deputies had in reality very little independent power. Wirtz and Louvignies were obliged to ask leave of the States for every step they took. They wasted hours in writing to ask leave to cut this dyke or open that sluice. Louvignies, who was stationed at Schoonhoven on the Lek, with the Spanish cavalry, was anxious to flood the district between Lek and Holland Ijssel with as little delay as possible, for the French had occupied Oudewater and might march across the country to Schoonhoven at any moment. He applied first to the town of Schoonhoven, and then to the Commission for Inundations for leave to cut the right-hand dyke of the Lek, but was referred back to the States, who at last gave permission on June 28.

Not peasants only, but cities, sometimes hindered the work of inundation. The strip of country between the Holland Ijssel and the Oude Rijn was scarcely set under water at all, owing to the influence of the city of Gouda. Gouda lies on the Holland Ijssel, commanding the sluices of a small branch stream (the Gouwe) which flows north out of the Ijssel into the Rijn at a point (Gouwche Sluis) half-way between Leiden and Bodegraven where the Prince lay.[1] It was desired to pass water from the Ijssel along this stream into the Rijn, which was not tidal, whence it would flow over the Lower Rjin dyke (the right-hand or northern Rijn dyke) into the polders along the river Mije, between Zwammerdam and Nieuwerbrug. Water would also be obtained from the Ijssel by opening sluices in the Wierikken canals, two immense waterways running parallel to one another and connecting the Ijssel to the Rijn. The land between these canals would then be flooded and the water would flow into the Rijn and over the North Dyke into the polders. The Rijn itself was dammed at Nieuwerbrug and also at a point between Alphen and the mouth of the Gouwe.

The city of Gouda refused to open the sluices of the Gouwe until the States of Holland gave a solemn assurance

[1] See Map of Inundations.

that the lands around Gouda itself were not to be flooded and that no dykes were to be cut. Holland felt itself unable to override the wishes of so powerful a member, who might, if put into an ill humour, have brought all kinds of calamities on the country. The assurance was given and the result was that the strip of country inundated between Holland Ijssel and Oude Rijn was the narrowest throughout the whole water-line, being confined to the half-mile between the Wierikken canals.

William, when he arrived at Bodegraven on June 18, at four in the afternoon, found the Deputies Ruyl and Alphen, who were in charge of the inundations, eagerly awaiting his arrival, in the hope that he would put pressure on the governors of Gouda.[1] William wrote a short letter to the States next day, saying that 'the inundation had not reached the 'promised level, but so much was being done by cuttings that 'he trusted all would now be well; that he had caused a dam 'to be laid at the Gouwsche Sluis, put the affairs of the peasants 'in order, and would exert himself to the utmost for the con-'servation of Holland.' He sent Van Beverningk to Gouda on the 19th to insist on the opening of the sluices of the Gouwe, but it was the 22nd before the water was suffered to flow through to the Rijn in such a manner as to flood the polders to the north of the Rijn-dyke.[2] These inundations north of the Rijn—bounded by the Mije on the west and the Grecht on the east—met those which were being made from the water-systems of Amstel-land, by the opening of a sluice called the Woerdsche Verlaat at the junction of the Grecht, Mije and other watercourses.

From the Woerdsche Verlaat northwards to the Zuyder Zee the inundations were chiefly directed by the City of Amsterdam and by Prince Maurice at Muiden. A complicated network of small streams, all running into and out of one another, covers 'Amstel-land,' from the Haarlemmermeer (now dry and poldered, but then a vast lake) to the

[1] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, June 19, p. 114.
[2] *Ibid.*, Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 63 and n. 3.

Zuyder Zee. The two main streams of this system—the Amstel on the west and the Vecht on the east—supplied most of the water required for inundation. Maurice, when he arrived at Muiden, pierced the left banks of the Vecht at several places between Nichtevecht and the Zuyder Zee, so as to flood the polders west of the river. He also made a cut in the Zuyder Zee dyke itself between Muiden and Muiderberg, and opened the sluices on the right of the Vecht at Uitermeer and the junction of the Korte Hoefsche Canal and the Vecht, so that the polders east of the river were flooded partly with salt, partly with river water. The sea-water, however, was not allowed to stream in at high tide unhindered along the Vecht. At Hinderdam the gates of the sluice were kept shut, so that no salt water came above that point, but, to prevent the water running out of the river completely at low tide a dam was laid across the river just to the south of Muiden, in the middle of July, by order of the Government of Amsterdam.

Farther to the west, the Amstel dykes between the villages of Ouderkerk and Uithoorn were cut by Amsterdam, setting the polders to the right of the Amstel under water, while another cut was made in the Gein, which enabled the Amstel inundations to unite with those to the west of the Vecht. These operations were not carried out till the first week in July. Amsterdam was more concerned to secure her own immediate safety than to co-operate in the general scheme for a united water-line. The reluctance with which this greatest of all the cities acted upon her responsibilities towards the State in danger is indeed astonishing. As late as June 11 the Council of Amsterdam refused to comply with the request of the States of Holland to inundate the approaches to the city, and instructed their Deputies in the States of Holland 'that the demand was too premature,' and that, if the States persisted, 'the burgomaster and Council . . . would find themselves obliged to prevent and hinder it by other means.'[1] When the news came that the French were over the Rijn, they quickly altered their minds. On the 14th it was resolved

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 90.

to make inundations, and on the 19th, by the opening of the sluices at Gouda, the water in the streams of Rijnland was raised to a level sufficient to make inundations possible round the city without letting salt water into the Haarlemmermeer. By June 23 the floods around the city were already so high that the gunpowder manufacturers on the Heiligenweg to the south-west of the city said it would soon come inside their mills. Sea-water, so destructive to the polders, was used as little as possible. Here, however, Amsterdam was not entirely her own mistress. Gouda, who was responsible for letting through sufficient water from the Holland Ijssel to keep up the level of the Rijnland streams, was negligent and grudging in keeping open her sluices. On July 30 Amsterdam complained to the States of Holland that unless Gouda were forced to let through more water, the sluices at Halfweg would have to be opened, and salt water let in to the Haarlemmermeer, so as to raise it to the required level.[1] Fortunately, Gouda was coerced into better behaviour, and the only sea-dyke cut was that at Jaaphannes, east of the city, and even that was closed again at the end of July.

The condition of troops and fortifications in the Five Posts on the water-line was very far from satisfactory for weeks and even months after the inundations were completed. Glimpses into the reports of commissioners and the letters of distracted generals reveal an administrative incompetence on the part of the States of Holland and a slack and unwilling spirit in the governments of towns such as is almost incredible. The States did indeed usually comply with the requests of the officers for more troops, pay and materials, as far as resolutions on paper were concerned, but as soon as the Executive Committee of the States (the Gecommitteerde Raden) were entrusted with the realisation of the resolutions in a practical form, delay —almost infinite in extent—set in like a blight. Local patriotism likewise seemed extinct. Intense dislike of the near

[1] Van Sypestein and De Bordes, part ii. pp. 92–3.

presence of the military made the towns on the water-line on many occasions obstinately reluctant to co-operate with the generals in putting defence works into repair, or providing food, fodder and materials for the army. So disheartened did some of the best generals become at this state of paralysis that they almost gave up hope of holding their posts at all, and, but for the fortunate inaction of the French army from about June 28 onwards, all might yet have been lost and the Dutch have had no one but themselves to blame.

Marshal Wirtz arrived in Gorinchem to find the burghers grudgingly at work deepening the canals round the town. 'They had no courage,' the Commissioners for Inundations had written to the States on June 18. Wirtz was able to shame or terrorise them into working more speedily, but he could by no means induce the government of the town to co-operate in cutting down trees and destroying buildings which stood in the way of the defence works. The magistrates sheltered themselves behind the States and refused to do anything.[1]

Nevertheless, Wirtz had put the town into a reasonable state of defence by July 7. He spoke in his letters to the States of his treatment by the town in a manner which must have made the Deputies of Gorinchem—who heard the letters read aloud before the Assembly—feel angry and ashamed. 'There are people here,' he wrote on July 3, 'who consider 'all the labour for the defence of the country (such as the 'inundations, the ruin and cutting down of trees and gardens 'near at hand) as an unbearable burden and a piece of gross 'insolence.'

And again on July 17: 'This morning someone (of the 'town) came to me with the Heer van der Graeff of Dordrecht, 'the Deputy for these parts from Your Noble Mightinesses. 'He first informed the Deputy, who was as yet ignorant, about 'certain matters, and then tried to pass off the same false 'information on me, whereupon in five words I showed the

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 47: letter of Wirtz to States.

'Lord Deputy that the contrary was the case. And the same 'thing happens in everything for which I ask the assistance 'of the Governors, and without their interference nothing can 'take place. . . . I must in general remark that they show an 'incredible "froideur" in such matters as are necessary for the 'defence of the country and of their own city.'

At Schoonhoven on the Lek—a position on whose maintenance hung the safety of Rotterdam—the delays in fortifying the town reached a climax. The town lay almost undefended, and the States of Holland had considered the question of fortifying it as early as December 1671.

The Report of the Gecommitteerde Raden on the subject was not delivered till March 4, 1672, and the States gave no more orders about it till June 15, when the Gecommitteerde Raden were requested to put it into a state of defence. The order was repeated on August 6, as nothing had yet been done, but in November the defence works were still incapable of resisting an enemy. The excuse of the Gecommitteerde Raden was that they had sent money to Schoonhoven for the purpose, but that, as the town was slack in paying its taxes, the supply had been stopped. At last the States-General stepped in and put the matter into the hands of Prince Maurice and Marshal Wirtz on December 6.

Louvignies, who came there with the Spanish auxiliaries and two Dutch infantry regiments, did not cease to urge the importance of this town in every letter he addressed to the States. 'De la conservation de ce poste icy,' he wrote, 'dépend celle de Rotterdam et de Dort, et cependant je me 'trouve dans l'impossibilité de le pouvoir garder à moins d'un 'grand effect de l'innondation, à cause que le corps de la ville 'n'est nullement en estat de deffense pour n'y avoir pas un 'seul rampart ou parapet pour pouvoir faire tirer un mousque-'taire à couvert.'[1] The Commissioners of the Water Line

[1] Louvignies to the States of Holland, June 26, 1672. Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 57.

seconded his representations with energy. 'If this place 'were once lost, it could not be recovered for love or money. '. . . The General Louvignies complains that there is no 'engineer, of whom there is the greatest need.' They praised the 'vigilance, activity and good conduct' of Louvignies, 'towards whom, in our opinion, the State has a singular 'obligation.'

Louvignies' chief anxiety, besides the fortification of the town, was the lack of troops; 200 armed burghers from Rotterdam and 79 marines were all he obtained in answer to his own and Van Beverningk's pressing demands. His 1,500 men were quite insufficient to defend an absolutely open position. At last, on July 4, he wrote to the States disclaiming responsibility for what might happen unless his demands were attended to. 'As up to the present not one 'of the things has arrived of which I indicated in my memo- 'randa I had need, I must point out to you once more that 'your orders have not been obeyed, and that of the infantry 'which you said you had sent only 5 companies have arrived, 'that is, not more than 120 or 130 men . . . And it is my 'duty to tell you also that you have sent me cannon but 'no gunners, nor anyone capable of forming a battery; 'please send me some—also someone to take charge of the 'magazine.' [1]

Lack of cannon, artillerymen and ammunition was felt at almost every post on the line. Wirtz accepted with alacrity an offer from Van Beverningk (who was with William at Bodegraven) of a few small pieces of cannon, and added that 'of powder, bullets, matches, in short, of everything I 'am in the sorest need.' [2] John Maurice from Muiden complained bitterly to the States and to the Prince of Orange. 'I have been here three days,' he wrote on June 23, 'without 'a spade or shovel, with never a stiver of money, no cannon, 'finding here six iron pieces in rotten carriages.' He applied

1 Louvignies to the States, July 4, Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 58.
2 Wirtz to the States, June 25, *ibid.* p. 49.

repeatedly to Amsterdam, who was responsible for Muiden's provisioning, but for the first fortnight at least little attention was paid to his demands. 'Are you resolved,' he wrote to the Burgomasters on June 22, 'to deliver up this little band 'to the butcher's block? I grow red with shame to hear 'these Spanish officers crying out for powder and matches; 'so public is it that the enemy must get wind of it.' A few small pieces of cannon did arrive in answer to this appeal, but they were on such low carriages that 'they were only fit for 'drinking healths with.' [1] By June 30, however, Amsterdam had overcome the diffidence or incompetence which had withheld her from supplying the all-important outpost, and Prince Maurice wrote to William on July 6: 'The gentlemen 'of Amsterdam are kindly providing me with everything; 'they have sent me 32 pieces of iron cannon.' [2]

Schoonhoven, however, which guarded almost as important a thoroughfare into Holland as did Muiden—the River Lek itself—was not supported by any such self-sufficing city as Amsterdam. The States could think of nothing better than to request William to send some aid in men or artillery to General Louvignies from his own post at Bodegraven. William, who was with difficulty preventing his two best infantry regiments from deserting for lack of pay, replied to the request in the following memorandum of July 8, in which more than a touch of polite irony was mingled with practical suggestions and a strong reminder of the very grave position in which the army lay, such as only vigorous pressure in the administrative bodies of the State could remedy.

'We must first say in reply,' wrote the 21-year-old Captain-General (who since his elevation to the Stadtholderate three days before [3] had adopted the first person plural for all his official correspondence), 'that we very well understand all 'these alleged defects, and that we find the representations of

[1] Prince Maurice to the Government of Amsterdam, June 22, 23; Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 80. Also Maurice to William, June 22 and 23 in Groen van Prinsterer's *Archives de la Maison Orange Nassau*, 2nd series, v. pp. 249–50.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 259.

[3] See below, chap. xi.

'the Lord Louvignies to be founded in very good reason, and 'that we are absolutely willing to contribute what we possibly 'can for the prevention of threatened and alleged misfortunes. 'But indeed we cannot think of any means by which these great 'defects can be supplied. It has been abundantly demonstrated 'to Your Noble Great Mightinesses, and you cannot be unaware 'that the five posts at present on Your Noble Great Mighti-'nesses' frontiers are very thinly provided with troops, and 'that of the Lord Louvignies, which is so important, suffers 'notoriously from lack of men, but we cannot see whence 'reinforcements will be forthcoming, and must refer ourselves 'to the wise direction of Your Noble Great Mightinesses to 'find means whereby we may be enabled to comply with your 'request. As for the gunners, ammunition of war and such 'provisions, we must refer ourselves to Your Noble Great 'Mightinesses' duties concerning the Council of State, and 'your orders to the Lords Gecommitteerde Raaden, these 'being affairs of such importance that we cannot succeed in 'them by any other means. We are informed that an engineer 'and some stock of money have been sent to the Lord Lou-'vignies, and hope that some of the complaints will be satisfied 'thereby. Perhaps you will be able to supply another boat or 'two on the Lek through the college of Admiralty at Amster-'dam, and we will send an overseer to Schoonhoven to look 'after the magazine there, and also we will write to the Lord 'Louvignies that he shall sink, without scruple, whatever craft 'is to be found on the Lek above and about the heads of the 'works on the dykes, and so prevent the approach of the 'enemy along the rivers and roads.'[1]

William's reference to boats draws attention to another feature of this amphibious warfare—namely the provision of small craft, armed with guns and crews of thirty or forty men on the rivers, and of flat-bottomed boats on the floods, to prevent attacks being made down the waterways. On the Waal at Gorinchem Wirtz had two boats armed with big guns, which he said kept the enemy at a distance better than

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. pp. 60–1.

the light-armed vessels. To the Lek, in compliance with William's suggestion, two boats were sent, and the river was blocked with sunk barges and palings. But the district where these little craft were of the most importance was in the flooded country between the Zuyder Zee and William's posts on the Old Rhine. In the Zuyder Zee itself, just outside the harbour of Amsterdam, De Ruyter placed a warship, two frigates and nine yachts, so as to waylay any attempt the French might make to reach Amsterdam by sea from Kampen or Naarden. Inland, armed yachts were placed on every canal and river, and especially beside the half-completed and ill-garrisoned military posts. Altogether there were twelve craft between Goede-jan-Verwelle Sluis on the Holland Ijssel and the Uithoorn on the Amstel. Two of these lay in the Rhine beside the Prince's port at Nieuwerbrug, two more in the Wierikken canals. During the autumn this number was increased to about twenty-five.[1]

Bad and irregular pay of the troops often brought the army to the verge of breaking up altogether. The Commissioners of the States wrote on July 3 from Gorinchem that unless the regiments there were paid they would disband, and Wirtz himself described how 'ten burghers' wives came to 'me, begging money for the cavalry quartered on them, 'saying that they had furnished them and two other companies 'with board and lodging for some time past.'[2] Where the regiments were paid by a province already conquered by the French, the men deserted in large numbers. With William at Bodegraven lay two infantry regiments, who were reckoned as the best Dutch troops in the army, but, unfortunately, they stood on the 'repartition' of Gelderland, and consequently, Gelderland having been conquered, were without paymasters. Even the troops of Holland suffered. Van Beverningk, who was still at William's side, and corresponded regularly for him with the States, wrote on June 29 to the States of Holland concerning some Holland regiments: 'Unless you promptly take

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. pp. 81–3. [2] *Ibid.* p. 51.

'measures against it, these troops will desert, and this post 'will be stripped to the last man. I have already several times 'represented the need of the company of Captain Phroosten, 'a newly-raised company of such fine calibre, and so strong in 'numbers the like cannot be found in the whole army, and 'yet these men have been brought to the utmost extremity. 'I have resolved, if I receive no answer to-day, to give them '100 ducatons by borrowing out of the State Chest, for it 'is too pitiful to see them go off in such a wretched way.'[1] Holland afterwards took over the payment of the other provincial troops herself. She was never backward in voting money, but the Gecommitteerde Raaden, who were charged with the execution of the resolutions were always slow in carrying them out.[2]

A spirit of faint-heartedness seemed to possess the whole army, and their morale was not improved by the retreat to Holland and the refuge behind the floods. 'Our soldiers 'run away,' wrote Prince John Maurice to the Prince of Orange on June 30, 'on account of the fatigues of guard and working 'at fortifications, and all who have wives and children in the 'towns taken by the enemy, go off, notwithstanding all 'I do to prevent them, but they run away from their posts at 'night, so that I can assure Your Highness I haven't 600 'infantry under my command.'[3]

John Maurice was at this time over seventy years old. Himself a member of the House of Nassau, and a veteran soldier, he might well have felt some jealousy at the elevation of his boy cousin to a position of authority over him. Nothing but deference and respect, however, appears in the letters which he wrote from Muiden during this summer and winter. He referred to William on every point in which he was in doubt, and received without annoyance William's replies which were often delayed ('j'ai si peux de temps que vous ne 'le sauriez croire' was William's excuse) and were couched in language that never flattered and sometimes verged on

[1] Quoted, Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 68. [2] *Ibid.* p. 51.
[3] Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives*, 2nd series, v. pp. 256–7.

curtness. The correspondence is something more than a mere exchange of military news. It shows that William had inherited his grandfather's qualities as general and soldier. Whatever the restrictions placed by authority on his actions, there can be no doubt that from the first month of the campaign of 1672, he had fully entered into the life expected of a campaigner. This young man, who had learnt a little war from books when he was a child and had lately been educated by men who regarded war on land as the last disaster which could befall their nation, seemed more at home in the camp than some of his officers, and a great deal more than the Field Deputies. Authority, which De Witt had so fondly tried to convert into subordination, sat as easily on him as on the resplendent Louis, his enemy; more so indeed, for William ruled his soldiers without the aid of fine clothes, dramatic strategy or brilliant rewards. No one governed him as Louvois governed Louis; his own mind—as clear as it was deep—knew no hesitations, no second thoughts, whether the matter pondered were a separate peace with England or that the cavalry of a certain regiment should be dismounted and made to serve on foot. He made few complaints about the desperate condition of affairs, other than the letter of July 8, already quoted; he did what was to be done with the materials ready to hand, and those who worked under him worked speedily, for in two days after his arrival, the post at the Nieuwerbrug was fortified and manned.

One short letter to John Maurice shows how firm was his grasp both of detail and of principle in this most complicated and confused of campaigns. The inundations of the polders had rendered cavalry almost useless, though the greater part of John Maurice's force in and round Muiden consisted of horse regiments. Should the cavalry, asked Maurice, be dismounted and made to serve on foot? The Spaniards had no objection, but the Dutch were in doubt. William wrote on June 27 that he had already dismounted his horse at Bodegraven, given them muskets and matchlocks and made them serve as infantry;

if the Muiden horse objected, they must be constrained. With equal forthrightness he protested in the same letter against the custom practised by individual provinces of sending marching orders on their own authority to regiments which were on their repartition. He would brook no orders save from the States-General. 'Ceux de Frise' had sent an order to Kingma, colonel of one of the cavalry regiments at Muiden, ordering him into Friesland. William wrote to Maurice that as the order did not emanate from the States-General it must be disregarded: 'You will do very well to 'keep that regiment with you, having no other orders to 'follow than those of the States-General, not those of a par-'ticular province.' John Maurice once ventured to dispute an order from his cousin for the removal of some cavalry from Muiden to North Holland, where a descent on the coast by the enemy was feared. William sent a short note 'to tell you that it is necessary for the service of the State that 'you should let it go as soon as it is any way possible and 'without losing a moment of time. I confide in your conduct 'and vigilance to perform this.' Yet, lest Maurice think the order unreasonable, he added a postscript: 'I would not 'have given orders to this regiment if the States had not 'pressed me hard, because they fear the English will make 'a descent near Helder or Texel.'[1]

He showed the same detachment from the noblemen who served under him—the young men of the type of Odyck and the younger Zuylestein, who, when the time came for restoring the Stadtholderate, pressed him to establish an Orange terror and 'hang a dozen of the States.' The States themselves were not further from bending him to their will. The faithful Bentinck, already dear to William as none other ever was, emerges not at all in the events of this year. That he was present at the Prince's side perpetually we know from the total lack of correspondence between them. William may have derived comfort from his unobtrusive services. But none

[1] Groen Van Prinsterer, *op. cit.*, pp. 262–3.

ventured to speak for the Prince or to give orders for him. Now, as ever after, he stood alone.

That the Dutch would resort to inundation so soon had apparently not been expected by the French, for Louvois had written to his father, Le Tellier, on June 20, from the King's camp before Doesburg: 'Sa Majesté sera en huit jours en 'état de marcher à Utrecht, et de là envoyer piller la Haye et 'trois ou quatre villes de Hollande, qui dans la sécheresse où 'nous sommes ne scauroient s'inonder, et on obligera les 'autres à se mettre sous l'eau dont ils recevront un dommage 'qu'ils ne pourront pas réparer de dix ans.'[1] When the Dutch themselves voluntarily chose to 'drown' their country, Louis and Louvois decided that further advance was impossible until winter brought frost. Louis covered his disappointment with his grand manner. 'La résolution de mettre tout 'le pays sous l'eau étoit un peu violente, mais que ne feroit-'on point pour se soustraire d'une domination étrangère?'[2] So he reflected, preferring to overlook the consideration of the geographical features of Holland; he might have forestalled the inundations by a swift advance and the capture of Amsterdam. His mistake in not at once seizing Muiden has been noticed. This, however, was only a detail. The whole plan of Louis's conquest, after the crossing of the Rhine, had been militarily unsound. While the Dutch were retreating and digging themselves in at the five posts, Turenne was besieging Nijmegen, and Louis lay before Doesburg, with the main force of the French army divided between them. Luxembourg and the Bishop of Münster were employing another large division in the reduction of Deventer and the towns of Overijssel. Rochefort's troop of 1,800 horse, which followed on the heels of the Dutch into the Veluwe, and occupied Naarden, Utrecht and Amersfoort, was but an advance guard of the vast French army, quite unfit to undertake extensive offensive operations. By the time Louis arrived in Utrecht (July 3) the floods

[1] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i. p. 220.
[2] *Mémoire de Louis XIV*, Rousset, *Vie de Louvois*, i. Appendix.

were so advanced as to render a march into Holland out of the question. Louvois, whose jealousy of Turenne had played a large part in inducing Louis to delay his advance, seemed unconcerned at the failure—for it was no less—of the campaign. 'The king, having realised that all the approaches 'to Holland are at present inundated,' he wrote to his father on July 9, 'and that until the frost sets in it is not possible 'to penetrate them, has ordered the advance guards to be 'withdrawn which he had caused to be placed in the little 'towns of Woerden and Montfoort.' [1]

The splendid powers of such generals as Condé, Turenne and Luxembourg had been wasted on sieges instead of employed in brilliant strokes of strategy. The comments of a shrewd Englishman, who had accompanied Louis's army from Paris, on the position of affairs in the French camp in the end of June, show where the weakness of the King's generalship really lay. This Englishman was no other than Sidney Godolphin, who, in the years to come, was to serve Charles, James, William and Anne in high positions in the English Government. As head of the great Ministry which enabled Marlborough to break the power of France in the campaigns of 1703–9, he brought about the defeat of the King whose victorious progress he had watched from close at hand in 1672. One wonders whether some ironic memory of that long-ago Dutch campaign crossed his mind when the couriers arrived from Blenheim.

To Clifford he wrote on June 28, two days' march from Utrecht, of 'the world of young gentlemen of quality there are 'in the Army, perpetually ready to seek all occasions where 'tis 'possible to get any reputation.' As yet no occasion more hazardous than the crossing of the shallows in the Rhine had presented itself for these 'youths that mean to be of note.' The King 'very seldom fails to reward those that deserve it 'before they expect it.' He was besides 'very careful to pro- 'vide for the convenience of the soldiers, always marching on 'horseback in the heat and in the rain.' But this appreciation

[1] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i. p. 223.

did not blind Godolphin to Louis's real defects. The army commanded in person by the King 'serves only to receive 'those places which before had yielded upon the summons 'of Condé and Turenne. Since the beginning of the campaign 'the King's own army, where the choicest troops are, has 'besieged but two places, viz. Orsoy and Doesburg. And 'therefore I say, if the King went back to Paris and left the 'Prince of Condé his army to prosecute the war, I believe you 'would soon hear of him at Amsterdam or the Hague or where 'he had most mind to go. But,' he added with a note of anxiety, 'I like it better as it is; methinks the King of France 'has enough already, and I would fain have the progress 'stopped.'[1]

It is not, therefore, surprising that, with a King who loved 'glory' too much to learn sound generalship, and a Minister whose mean dislike of the great Condé and Turenne and Luxembourg made him take pleasure in thwarting them, the summer campaign of 1672 should have ended in a manner unworthy of its beginning. There was probably another reason for the delay. The Dutch ambassadors who were sent to Louis while he lay before Doesburg, desiring conditions of peace, raised hopes in Louis and Louvois of a speedy and humiliating capitulation on the part of the States-General.[2] Such an end to the war would have been highly desirable and in keeping with the pageant Louis had staged for himself. His parleyings with them, which ended so unexpectedly in their refusal of his terms, occupied ten very critical days at the end of June and beginning of July. In that interval Holland was able to make her flood barrier more or less complete.

A few days after his entry into Utrecht, having waited in vain for the return of the Dutch ambassadors in a proper mood of submission, Louis determined to go back to Paris. It was

[1] Godolphin to Clifford; P.R.O., State Papers, France, 134.
[2] See further, pp. 216–9 below.

clear that without great inconvenience and risk there were at present no more towns to be conquered. He therefore marched through Arnhem, Nijmegen and Grave into the Meuse Valley, and on July 17 assembled before 's Hertogenbosch in North Brabant an army of about 40,000 men. Luxembourg remained in Utrecht in command of the conquered provinces. Turenne, having at last taken Nijmegen and Crèvecœur, united his force to that of Louis, while Chamilly also came up from Maastricht having just reduced the important fortress of Grave.[1]

's Hertogenbosch itself was fortunately preserved from the fate of the other towns in the Meuse basin. Had it been besieged it would have gone hard with it, for its defences were in a worse state, if possible, than those of most other cities. Its garrison consisted of its own citizens and about 2,000 Spanish troops who had been hastily sent thither on July 5 from Antwerp. For 's Hertogenbosch was almost as much a safeguard of the Spanish Netherlands as of the Dutch Republic. Its military governor, an Irishman named Kilpatrick, and its citizens, were of a good heart and, when Louis approached, the Calvinist clergy of the city turned out in a body to work at the improvement of the walls. But the rains, which had by this time followed the drought of May and June, had done the town good service. The marshes around the walls became sodden, so that no army could approach within attacking distance. On July 27 Louis gave up all attempt to press the town and proceeded to break up his host into three separate divisions. He himself departed to France with 8,000 of the best troops in the army, including the whole of the 'Maison du Roi'; Chamilly returned with 15,000 to Maaseyck and Tongeren, whence he had come to capture Grave; Turenne, with 12,000, was sent into the 'Island' of Bommel, between Meuse and Waal. In a few weeks' time he and some of his force left the Netherlands to occupy Wezel and guard the Rhine Valley; for the advance of Brandenburg and

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii.

the Imperial troops from Germany was at last threatening the French hold on Wezel and the Cleves towns.

Besides these troops available for action, about 40,000 more were scattered in garrison in the conquered towns of Gelderland, Overijssel, Utrecht and Holland. About thirty places within the borders of the Republic received permanent garrisons. Mignet and other historians have blamed Louvois severely for keeping so many places, on the ground that the main fighting force of the army was thereby scattered and broken up. Turenne had advised that only the large towns and important fortresses, such as Arnhem, Nijmegen, Schenkenschans and Grave, should be garrisoned, and the fortifications of the Ijssel towns razed. But the fault lay not so much in leaving many troops in garrison—the army was so large that it could easily have spared even more—as in neglecting to follow up the crossing of the Rhine by a swift forward march. Once the chance of the last three weeks of June had been lost, the possibility of an easy conquest of Holland passed away for ever. Yet, even then, had Louvois allowed it, the troops in the province of Utrecht might have gained some advantage over the Dutch which would have enabled them to press a victory. The Duc de Luxembourg, who, after Louis's departure, was left in charge of the Army of Occupation, was chafing by the end of August for an offensive policy.

He was the same Luxembourg who was to be William's constant antagonist in every campaign until death took him in 1694. On many a hard-disputed field they were to meet—Seneff, St. Denis, Steinkirk, Landen—nor did either ever succeed in claiming a complete victory over the other. Now in this strange campaign of 1672 they faced one another for the first time—William behind his floods, slowly and steadily gathering forces for an attack that should somehow dislodge the French—Luxembourg chafing with the impatience of an imprisoned animal against the enforced delay—the prolonged inaction. He had under his command at Utrecht about 8,000

infantry and 5,000 horse, a body larger than the entire Dutch army. With these he had to garrison Utrecht, Montfoort, Ijsselstein, Woerden—which was occupied again by the French in September, as the Dutch had not sufficient troops to hold it in its unfortified condition—and other places on the right bank of the Lek.

But he could not wrest from Louvois any permission to undertake a big offensive. Whether any such attempt would have succeeded is hard to say. It is far from impossible that, had Luxembourg concentrated his efforts on the capture of some one post on the waterline, he would in time have gained his object. When it is considered that as late as November 25 the Marquis of Westerloo wrote to the Prince of Orange that Schoonhoven was 'ni hors de surprise, ni hors d'insulte et 'même n'est pas en estat d'estre défendue,' the inaction of the French appears in the highest degree impolitic. Schoonhoven could be approached by river, or by the high dyke on the north bank of the Lek. Its capture might have meant the complete breakdown of the Dutch defences. The evacuation of Oudewater on the Holland Ijssel on July 11 was another chance thrown away. Oudewater threatened the Goede-jan-Verwelle Sluis which Count Hoorn had had the greatest difficulty in putting into a state of defence. Indeed, on June 26, he only just prevented his council of war from declaring it indefensible. 'Goe-jan' was the gate to Gouda, and Gouda of its own free will had refused to surround itself with inundations. These two routes—by the Lek and the Ijssel, were certainly the most promising entrances into Holland. Muiden was too thoroughly cut off. Luxembourg wished to establish himself on the dykes of the Vecht between Weesp and Hinderdam, but the floods were too severe. 'I fear,' he wrote to Louvois, 'unless I become a duck, I cannot get on to 'those dykes I told you about.' He made several minor attacks on such positions in the neighbourhood of Muiden as were accessible. On August 2 he attacked the castles of Kronenburg and Loenersloot on the Vecht and Angstel

respectively, at the edge of the flooded area. Both fell into his hands after severe fighting. He hoped thereby to open a way to Abkoude further down the Angstel, but Maurice saw that all approaches were inundated and broken up. The young lieutenant who had been taken prisoner at Loenersloot after defending it gallantly all day with thirty men, was sent back free of ransom by Luxembourg to Maurice 'because 'he had defended himself like a brave man.' These successes were not followed up, and except for occasional skirmishes between French scouting parties and Dutch outposts, all remained quiet on the Muiden front.[1]

At the end of August came an order from Louvois that four battalions (about 2,400 men) must leave Utrecht for Wezel, whither Turenne had been sent to check the Imperialists. Luxembourg vigorously protested against any lessening of the forces under his command. His letter showed that he was fearful of a Dutch offensive, of a popular rising in Utrecht and in the countryside, in fact of real disaster to the French position if his hold were slackened. The people of Utrecht—with the exception of some members of the ruling class—were in a constant ferment of expectation of a deliverance by the Prince of Orange. To quiet and dishearten them, Luxembourg begged to be allowed to undertake 'some 'vigorous action. A small success here is capable of over-'throwing all Holland.' But for any such enterprise he needed more, not less, troops. 'Le Roi a de grosses 'garnisons dans les villes qui ne courent aucun risque, pourquoi 'ne m'en pas envoyer quelque monde?' To weaken the frontier was to court disaster, and he pleaded with ardour the disgrace of being attacked and perhaps dislodged by the Dutch. 'En moi bon sang ne peut mentir, et je m'intéresse 'plus que la plûpart des François à l'honneur de la France,' he said, with a covert sneer at Louvois' niggard care of his master's reputation in face of the enemy.[2]

[1] Letters of Maurice to William, August 5 and 22; Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives*, 2nd series, v. pp. 266–72.

[2] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, pp. 121–3; Luxembourg to Louvois, August 30, 176.

CHAPTER X

Peace Negotiations with France, June–July 1672.

'Everything is desperate and Amsterdam will be devoured 'last.' So spoke a Deputy of Gorinchem in the States of Holland on June 13 and his remark was typical of the distressed and bewildered feelings of the governors of Holland in the days following the French inroad into the Betuwe. Many, in particular the Deputies of the north Holland towns, were ready to follow De Witt's advice and remove the 'sedem 'imperii' to Amsterdam.[1] That city, 'lying in a flat country, 'on the sea, between north and south Holland, covering a 'wide area, well fortified, provided with sufficient provisions 'and ammunition,' seemed a more defensible capital in these days of peril than the open village of the Hague. Orders were actually given for the removal thither of the Treasury. But certain towns of south Holland—in particular Delft and Dordrecht—were unwilling to risk being cut off from their cities if the French broke through into Holland. They were in fear, too, of the people, who were daily growing more nervous and uncontrolled. The great magazine at Delft could never be removed to Amsterdam without such riots and disturbances as would put Burgomasters in peril of their lives.[2] The scheme was not pursued, and instead the proposal to send deputations seeking peace to the French King and England was adopted by the States of Holland on June 13. The first to suggest a mission to England seems to have been

[1] See above, p. 168; De Witt to Van Beverningk, June 9; Wagenaar, xiv. p. 30; Vivien en Hop, June 11, p. 106.

[2] Sylvius, *Vervolg van Aitzema*, i. p. 318.

Leiden.[1] The hope was to represent to Charles the fatal consequences of allowing Louis to conquer the Republic—'how far it concerns England and Spain that France should 'not be master.' The States-General, at the request of Holland, gave its consent to both embassies on June 15. De Witt held aloof from all traffic with the enemy.[2] He knew that no good would come of soliciting either Louis's mercy or England's assistance. He disapproved, but he could not prevent, the embassies—a sign that his influence was waning indeed. Contemporary historians even made him the author of the propositions for peace,[3] imagining a sudden break in the flawless singleness of policy and purpose with which he strove to the last moment to infuse courage and determination into the failing hearts of his countrymen. The last recorded speech of De Witt in the States of Holland, before a midnight assault on June 21 confined him to his bed, was for unity and order amongst the members of Holland in the face of civil disorder and peril from the invader.[4]

'There is great confusion in the land,' he said, 'and if the 'rulers do not show unity, we shall defeat ourselves. We 'suffer more from ourselves than from our enemies, and if we 'do not put matters in order, the whole thing will soon be 'without hope or remedy.' The provision of men and ammunition for the threatened towns—in particular for Nijmegen—the co-operation of the cities of Holland in the work of inundation and self-fortification,[5] these were the things which filled his mind and which he ceased not to press on his downcast fellow deputies in the States.

On June 16 the two embassies left the Hague. To England went Van Weede van Dijkveld, a Deputy of the province of Utrecht, and Halewijn, a Hollander, to join the Ambassador, Boreel, in England in an endeavour to win over Charles from the French alliance. They went without any

[1] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, June 13, pp. 110–11.
[2] Letter to Cornelis De Witt, June 18, 1672.
[3] Sylvius, Wicquefort, Wagenaar. [4] Vivien en Hop, p. 115, June 20.
[5] *Ibid.* pp. 109 and 116, June 13 and 16.

definite offers or proposals that would tempt the Court of England. Pieter de Groot of Rotterdam (son of Hugo Grotius) and late Ambassador to the Court of France, Johan van Gent, the ex-governor of the Prince of Orange, and Nassau-Odijk, the representative of William in the States of Zeeland, and Zeeland's chief spokesman in the States-General, were deputed to the King of France. They were an ill-assorted trio, two of them being stern anti-Orangists, and the third the Prince's cousin. Zeeland, however, had to be represented in so important an embassy; her comparative immunity from the war on land had increased her prestige in the States-General, and she was determined to keep a close eye on the movements of Holland. The Embassy was not given full powers to conclude peace. It was furnished with a humble letter to Louis, asking him to state the conditions by which the Republic might be restored to his favour.[1]

Grave irregularities attended the appointment of the Embassy. Van der Hoolck, the aged Deputy of Utrecht, protested against it; Fagel of Haarlem, the Griffier, refused to sign the letter to the French king. De Witt refused to make the proposal in the States-General on behalf of the Province of Holland.[2]

De Groot, Van Gent and Odijk set off along the Rijn bank to find Louis at Doesburg. They passed through the Prince's camp at Utrecht and through Rhenen, whence all but two persons had fled, the rest having been robbed and terrorised by the panic-stricken Dutch army on its retreat from the Ijssel two days before. About midnight of June 22, they arrived at Keppel, an ancient house about five miles to the east of Doesburg, 'where was a table and food, but no beds.'[3] Here, on the morning of June 23, they were met by Louvois and Pomponne, who demanded to know what they had to offer. They replied that they awaited the King's sentiments. The Frenchmen returned to the camp to consult

[1] Quoted Mignet, iv. p. 21. [2] Wicquefort, iv. pp. 423–24.
[3] Report of De Groot to States of Holland, June 25, Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, p. 127.

the King. His message did not inspire much hope in the unhappy ambassadors. He refused to negotiate further with them until they had been granted full powers, but, as a hint of what he expected, he warned them his conquests were already his own territory, that he expected in a few days to conquer a great deal more, that he must either keep what he had gained or be offered a satisfactory equivalent, that the Dutch must pay the full expenses of the war and give ample satisfaction to all His Majesty's allies.

With this answer De Groot returned alone to the Hague to report to his masters, the States of Holland, and to the States-General.

In his absence events had occurred which shook yet further the downcast spirits of Holland. De Witt lay seriously wounded in his house, quite unfit for some time to come for any further part in the direction of affairs. On the night of June 21 he had left the Binnenhof at a late hour, after attending a sitting of the States of Holland. Four youths had been watching the lights in the windows of the great Hall of the States from the house of Counsellor Van der Graeff on the Vyverberg opposite. Two of them were sons of Van der Graeff. De Witt was already being accused throughout the land of treachery, corruption and a hundred other crimes. Public fear and dismay must have a scapegoat, and who more obvious than De Witt? The four young men determined to rid the country there and then of the 'rascal.' They left the house and waited under the public gallows, in the gloom of the trees of the 'Groene Zoodje' on the Vyverberg, until the Grand Pensionary with his single attendant (he never walked either guarded or armed) passed by on his way to his house close by in the Kneuterdyk. He came: they fell upon him silently with their swords. De Witt was a strong man of his hands and cast one of them to the ground. After wounding him in several places, they ran away, leaving him for dead. His servant had fled, and De Witt lay quite alone

under the gallows upon which, two months later, he was to hang when revenge had had its perfect work. He managed to reach his house, and the wounds, though serious, were found not to be mortal. Young Jacob van der Graeff alone of the four assailants was taken and beheaded. He seems to have been scarcely in his right mind at the time, saying at his trial that he knew not why he had helped to do this deed, save that he was 'forsaken of God.' The crowd who saw him die hailed him as another Orange martyr—a second Buat. The other three escaped to the army, where they remained in close hiding until the States of Holland grew tired of the search.

De Witt lay in his bed for a month, cut off from the last act in the tragedy of the 'vrijheid' versus Orange. When he returned to look upon the scene he had left, it was changed past recognition: the Prince was Stadtholder, holding his old political foes at his mercy; there was nothing left for De Witt to do but to resign all his offices and seek the peaceful backwater of the 'Hoogen Raad.' The great events which took place in his absence lose much of the dignity and purpose which his guidance would have lent them. Vivien, his fellow Deputy of Dordrecht, who temporarily succeeded him as Grand Pensionary, was a man of little stature and very poor spirit compared with the great De Witt. The States of Holland had no leader, no spokesman to steer them through the difficulties of the negotiations for peace, or the humiliations of the repeal of the Perpetual Edict and the Restoration of the Stadtholderate. Whether the course of events would have been materially different had De Witt continued in office is impossible to say. It is hard to imagine him taking part in further negotiations with France. On the other hand, he would have been as powerless as any other to check the rising tide of popular fury against the Government, of relentless demand for 'Oranje.' Had he stood in the way, his life would probably have been immediately forfeit. He was spared a bitter cup; all that was required of him was to accept

the *jait accompli*. This he did with the dignity and serenity which were among his noblest qualities. No word of disappointment or vexation ever escaped him; rather, the impression is left that he was glad his distressed country had found a head and a leader who could think and act for it better than he.[1]

When De Groot returned on June 25, he found the spirits of the States of Holland, to whom he first reported, not only disturbed by the misfortune which had befallen their Grand Pensionary, but thoroughly depressed by recent news from the army. It so happened that the days of De Groot's absence coincided with the high-water mark of the French advance. The fortresses on the lower Waal—Voorn, St. Andries and Bommel—yielded; Utrecht opened its gates to the French; Amersfoort and Naarden were occupied by Rochefort's cavalry. Letters from the various generals kept pouring in upon the States, each with its burden of ill news. Dordrecht feared attack and asked for troops and provisions to stand a siege. In many places the inundations were unsatisfactory. Added to all this, the Gecommitteerde Raden reported a total lack of credit. 'We must go to market with 'ready money,' they said, on June 24; lack of money was holding up the most necessary supplies for the army; the troops were unpaid—in fact, 'if order is not restored, the 'finances will collapse.' [2]

In these terrible conditions, in an assembly composed of so many members, representing each the interest of his own city rather than of the whole country, it is perhaps not surprising that a desire for peace at almost any price should for a time have superseded the determination to bid defiance to the enemy. The debate which followed De Groot's report was marked by indecision, dismay and even personal animosity.

De Groot was asked to give his opinion on the chances of peace by negotiation. He replied that he saw but two alterna-

[1] See further chapter xi., below. [2] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, June 24.

tives—'to defend the State with the sword, or to come to 'terms "quovis modo"; the King can be disposed to leave 'all the provinces in the Union, if we redeem his conquests 'by delivering to him Maastricht and all the towns and 'fortresses which lie outside (*i.e.* in The Generality[1] and 'down the Meuse). The more we offer, the more we can 'retain; if we waste time in negotiating, we shall be ruined.'

Had De Groot any grounds for supposing that Louis would content himself with the towns and fortresses of the Generality, leaving the Provinces intact? Louvois had mentioned an 'equivalent' for his conquests, but had given no hint of what that meant. Godolphin, writing to his home government, had said that Louvois 'meant, as I believe, 'their places in Brabant,' and this rumour had probably taken hold of De Groot's mind. Throughout the next two days he appeared to be persuaded that France would accept fairly reasonable conditions. He even regarded the demand for the payment of war expenses and the 'satisfaction' (unspecified) of all the King's allies, as within the bounds of what the State must accept. He succeeded in carrying a majority of the towns of Holland with him.

The two members of the estate of Nobles led the way by recommending that peace be obtained by 'insisting on the 'Union (*i.e.* the Seven Provinces), religion and government 'intact, and letting the rest go.'[2]

The proud Dutch cities followed with broken and despairing repetitions of the impossibility of defending the country. The news of the fall of the Ijssel towns and Schenkenschans had come while De Groot was speaking. Delft declared that 'so many towns and provinces were lost, and we were about 'to fall into the utmost confusion; no other way is open but 'accommodation, and the province of Holland is most con-'cerned therein.' Leiden, forgetting her ancient prowess in face of a more terrible foe than France, said 'we must not

[1] See page 1 and Map.

[2] See for verbatim reports of the debate, Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, June 25, pp. 128–135, and Wagenaar, xiv. pp. 37–53; Wicquefort, iv. pp. 424–30.

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'bind ourselves by any conditions, but give absolute powers '(to De Groot); we should not have given such advice if 'we did not regard matters as desperate.' Rotterdam, fearful of being attacked from the river, said that the posts at Nieuwerbrug and Goede-jan-Verwelle Sluis were incapable of defence. The Assembly Hall of the States of Holland had never witnessed such a scene of broken nerves. The nations of the world, depicted in symbolic figures on that spacious ceiling, looked down upon what had lately been the most confident, the most prosperous governing body in Europe, now acknowledging its utter defeat. The red-coated Englishman in the centre panel stuck his foot out of the frame in what now seemed derision at his rival's discomfiture.

One voice was raised at last against the general despair—that of Amsterdam herself, whom De Witt had likened to 'the heart' of Holland. The great city, represented by Cornelis Hop, a man of energetic and self-confident personality and considerable eloquence in debate, seized the opportunity offered by the absence of De Witt and the downcast spirits of the other towns, to become mistress of the situation. Hop doubtless felt that the honour of Amsterdam was as important in this matter as that of the whole country. It is hard to tell in this government of city oligarchs where local patriotism ended and the greater sentiment began. Whatever his motives, Hop gave a new turn to the debate by declaring: 'The Deputies of Amsterdam have always followed maxims 'of justice and fortitude; we cannot understand how the 'Deputies of the cities can go so far; they should not; we 'must defend ourselves. This Assembly of Deputies is not 'qualified to give over the country to the enemy; we, for our 'part, shall seek the advice of our principals in this great 'matter.'

Amsterdam had cleverly referred the question to a constitutional point—the necessity of obtaining consent from the city governments before empowering De Groot to continue negotiations. The other towns were angry, for they

knew Amsterdam had the law of them. Their frayed tempers broke out in reproaches and entreaties to Amsterdam 'to join' with them. They spoke out in anger against what seemed to them her selfishness. 'Amsterdam was in a 'condition to stand a siege better than any other town; Amster-'dam had troops and ammunition, and we others not a man, 'neither powder nor shot.' 'If Amsterdam were all Holland, 'or all Holland inside Amsterdam, perhaps we might think 'otherwise,' said Delft, 'but the foe is now at our doors, all 'capital cities have surrendered; if we make terms with France, 'England, too, will seek accommodation. Let Amsterdam 'give her consent.' Leiden urged that there was no time for consulting their principals—if Amsterdam persisted in her opposition, a precedent could be found for voting without her. 'Necessity overrides law,' she said. Amsterdam refused to yield to the storm of protests. Her Deputies promised to man the defence posts themselves; hoped the members would not be so unjust as to capitulate without them; in any case the conditions were impossible; the State could never pay the whole expenses of the war, nor satisfy the allies of France—'the cost would be immense.'

'The conditions are impossible.' Here Amsterdam stood on firm ground; in this her judgment was superior to De Groot's and that of the other members. Alckmaar, her little neighbour in north Holland, backed her up by saying that the King of France himself would both impose and collect the taxes, 'and we would rather be slain by the enemy than 'by our own burghers.' Here was another fear: if the country yielded to the demands of France, the burghers would almost certainly rise upon their governors and perhaps murder them. The other towns probably felt that the disposition of the burghers whether they yielded or not was already so unsatisfactory that it could not be much worse. De Groot was called in again and repeated his former advice, at the same time levelling an angry threat at Amsterdam: 'The King will winter in the country so as to subdue

'Amsterdam, and if she resists him, he will leave not one 'stone upon another.' He could not more successfully have sealed Amsterdam's determination to resist. The Assembly broke up without coming to a decision; twenty-four hours were given in which to seek the advice of the town governments and the Deputies were to meet again on the 26th (Sunday) at 8 P.M.

The fate of the embassy, and with it of the whole country, lay now in the hands of the Government of Amsterdam. If that body refused to consent to further negotiation with the enemy, the States of Holland would be unable, legally, to proceed with the matter at all, even though all the other towns should agree. Absolute unity of all the members was, in such case, the law of the body politic of Holland.

The Burgomasters of Amsterdam in 1672 were Hooft, Outshoorn, Lambert Reynst and van der Poll. Of these only one, Reynst, was a partisan of De Witt and declared enemy to any elevation of the Prince of Orange. Valckenier, who, out of personal jealousy of De Witt rather than out of any real feeling for the Prince, had obtained for William his seat and vote in the Council of State in 1670 against the opposition of De Witt, had been out-voted at the elections for Burgomasters in the previous year. Had he possessed a smooth tongue and less insufferable arrogance, he might have governed Amsterdam uninterruptedly. But he made enemies even of men like Hooft and Outshoorn, who had been at one time his supporters. Now these two men had taken the place of himself and his favourite van Beuningen as Burgomasters. Hooft was a man of ability, as well as education and sense. Afterwards he was the intimate friend of Temple, who speaks of him with real feeling.[1]

The present crisis brought the most patriotic, the most able and the most unscrupulous of the Amsterdam oligarchy

[1] Temple, *Memoirs*, ii. pp. 457–450, ed. 1770.

into unlooked-for union. Now, if ever, was the time to assert the independence of their city in the face of national danger. Valckenier was in exultation. His rival De Witt was removed from the scene, perhaps for ever: if the Prince were to return to power, as was beginning to appear inevitable, Amsterdam, by adopting a bold front, could pose as the preserver, with him, of the integrity of the State—a necessary and powerful ally of the young Stadtholder. The prestige of the city depended on the success of a defiant policy which should confound and shame all other weaker-minded cities. These arguments appealed to other members of the Government besides Valckenier, and thus it came about that, in the debate on June 26 in full Council, Valckenier and his rivals, Hooft and Hasselaer, were found urging the same duty of resistance to the French in eloquent and moving terms.

Patriotic historians, both contemporary and modern, have painted the scene in the Council Chamber of Amsterdam, when the negotiations with France were discussed, in such glowing colours that it appears the whole Council were unanimous in condemning the continuance of the embassy. There are, however, sources which suggest that the decision eventually reached was not unanimous, but was only arrived at after strenuous arguments for and against the question. The whole Council (thirty-six in number) met in the morning of the 26th. Valckenier spoke of the chance given to Amsterdam, so far above other cities 'in favourable situation, fine 'fortifications and manifold artillery, ammunition, provisions 'and people,' 'to deliver the United Netherlands from all her 'calamities.' He drew parallels from the histories of other famous and heroic cities, ending with Rome herself, who had risen highest and fallen latest of all powers in the world. Gerard Hasselaer raised the widest issues of that day's decision: it would affect not only the United Provinces, but the whole of Europe: 'We must now set aside all partisan-'ships and factions which may exist, and with united hands

'resist the common ruin of the whole State.' Others spoke in the same strain.[1]

That there were objections we know from two sources—one, a burgher who kept a diary [2] and took a lively interest in the affairs of the city from the point of view of an enthusiastic member of the City Militia; the other, Bontemantel, a member of the Council, who took extensive notes of the debate.[3] The burgher and his companions, in common with the whole population of Amsterdam, were deeply opposed to treating with France and suspicious of some members of their Government. He noted in his diary on June 26:

> This morning the Council met and *argued much* (italics mine) whether the city should be held or whether to capitulate with France, upon which the votes were very much divided. Sixteen voices wished to hold the town; twenty wished to give it up, so that the sixteen, seeing themselves out-voted, threatened to call up the burghers to their assistance, who were on guard below: they were silenced, but by one means and another it became known among the burghers, and the matters treated of at the meeting are the true origin of all the strife and difficulties which have since occurred between Magistracy and citizens.

This entry is, of course, largely made up of sheer rumour, for the subject under discussion was not whether the town should surrender, but whether negotiations with France should continue. If some members of the Council threatened to call in the burghers, the case is unique in Dutch history. But it is not impossible, considering Valckenier's violent temper and unscrupulousness, and the importance of the matter in hand. Our other authority, Bontemantel, gives a less outspoken, but very suggestive account of what passed in the Council Chamber. 'It was '(unanimously) decided,' he says, 'to say in the States of Holland 'that we are resolved not to agree to the three points (*i.e.* war

[1] Valckenier, *Verwerd Europa*; Sylvius, *Vervolg aan Aitzema*, I. p. 320.

[2] *Een dag boek uit het* 'Rampjaar,' 1672: Historisch Genootschap te Utrecht, Bijdragen, viii. 1885.

[3] Printed in *Bijdragen voor Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis*, 1879, the article entitled *Amsterdamsche Aanteekeningen uit* 1672,' by J. F. Gebhard.

'indemnity, compensation of allies and equivalent for con-'quered territories), and that we are resolved to await everything 'to the uttermost and in no respect to agree to the embassy to 'the King.' The word 'unanimously' was first written and then carefully erased by the writer, as though he wished to imply without openly admitting that there were dissentient voices. The resolution, however arrived at, stood finally as follows:

'The Deputies of the city are to be requested to transport themselves again at once to the Hague and to make known to the Assembly there in the name of this city that the Council considers the terms of France to be unacceptable and that they will rather spend their lives and goods and risk the uttermost than condescend to such.

'But this city is inclined to make reasonable agreement with His Majesty on fair terms, even if it mean a contribution of a great part of their real property, on condition we are not made responsible for the pretensions of His Majesty's allies, and that we are left with our freedom of religion and of government.'

It was suggested and agreed that Louis might be offered an indemnity amounting to one-sixth of the private means of the inhabitants of the country. But it was proudly added to the resolution that the city itself was in a condition to resist the enemy for a long time; its inhabitants could render it impregnable by contributing to the city coffers the sixth of their incomes which would otherwise go to the King of France, and such a resistance might save the whole State at last.

Such was the answer which the Deputies of Amsterdam carried back to the States of Holland. But that body, when it met in the evening of June 26, did not wait for the return of the Amsterdammers before proceeding to business. The Deputies of Amsterdam, Hoorn, Edam and Purmereind had not arrived by 9 o'clock. Schiedam was also absent. Legally, therefore, no resolutions could be taken. But such were the fears of the other cities, and such their dislike of the great city

of the north, that constitutional procedure was violated, the debate began, and De Groot was ordered by a majority vote to proceed with his embassy. The leading voices in this policy were the Nobles, Leiden and Dordrecht. Alckmaar had lost her courage of the day before and voted with them ; so also did Briel, while regretting the necessity. Medemblik, Monnikendam and Enkhuizen appear either to have protested or to have refrained from voting. The resolution was passed ' so ' to direct matters in the States-General that full powers be ' given to the Ambassadors to the King of France, so as to ' conclude peace on the best terms possible, so long as Religion, ' Freedom and Government remain in being.' Vivien of Dordrecht, acting Pensionary for De Witt, allowed voting to take place after eliciting the opinion of all the members in favour of a conclusion. Here we miss the firmer mind of De Witt. It can hardly be supposed that he would ever have suffered such a gross breach of constitutional procedure in a matter affecting the fate of the whole country.

The States of Holland—what there was of them—repaired at once to the Hall of the States-General. Enkhuizen alone refused to take any part in the proceedings. The midnight scene which now took place in the States-General, culminating in the despatch of De Groot with full powers, was unworthy of the sovereign governing body of a great State. The only members who protested against the embassy were Zeeland and Friesland. Zeeland had already sent deputies earlier in the day to the States of Holland to protest against any further negotiations. Zeeland's territory was still intact ; her anger was aroused by the high-handed manner in which Holland had hitherto conducted the negotiations almost independently of the other provinces. Zeeland had nothing to gain and much to lose by a peace which would hand over her land frontiers—the Generality—to France. Pensionary Vivien, who received the deputation, did small honour to his spirit as chief Minister of State by urging the ' sad state of affairs, great progress of

'the enemy, panic in the towns and fear that the enemy would 'break through'[1] as reasons for an immediate peace. The Zeeland Deputies continued to declare their opposition to the embassy.

The discussion in the States-General at 11 o'clock in the evening of June 26 was opened by the representatives of the three conquered provinces, Utrecht, Gelderland and Overijssel. 'The State is nearly lost,' began Gelderland miserably. Overijssel and Utrecht echoed 'lost.' Zeeland and Friesland refused to consent to treat. The Deputies of Groningen were absent. The voting was in favour of treating by a majority of four to two—Holland, Gelderland, Utrecht and Overijssel in favour; Zeeland and Friesland against. Constitutional procedure demanded unanimity, but Holland overrode the objection. De Groot must return to Louis. One more difficulty, however, had to be overcome or disregarded. Gaspar Fagel of Haarlem, Secretary to the States-General, refused to sign the resolution granting the full power. It was signed by Spronssen, one of his subordinates.

De Groot, who had had no rest for two nights, left the States-General at 2 A.M. and lay down until seven in the morning of June 27. At that hour he was awakened by the Pensionaries of Leiden and Gouda (Burgersdijk and Van der Tocht), who besought him, 'les mains jointes,' to depart immediately if he would save what was left of the province. They were resolved, they told him, to give up their towns on the first summons of the enemy. The 'plein pouvoir,' they said, was not yet drawn up in form, but would be sent after him. 'Je confesse,' said De Groot afterwards, 'que leur 'discours me fit peur et qu'il me fist haster mon voyage au 'delà de mon dessein pour empescher une faiblesse si grande.'[2] He left the Hague at once, and hastened to the Prince's headquarters at Bodhegraven, where he hastily informed William

[1] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, p. 138.
[2] De Groot to Wicquefort, April 3, 1674; Krämer, *Lettres de Pierre de Groot*.

and Van Beverningk of what had passed. 'I would not,' said Van Beverningk, 'be charged with a mission like yours.' 'Nor I,' said William. 'I rejoice,' replied De Groot, 'that 'our country is yet fortunate in finding those who will risk 'their lives for her safety.' [1] After this brief pause, he hurried on again and arrived at seven in the evening at the house of Amerongen, beyond Utrecht, where Louvois had taken up his abode. Since De Groot had passed that way three days before, the French had occupied the whole district. He dined at Amerongen with Louvois and his brother, 'sans parler 'd'affaires,' and then proceeded to Rhenen, where his fellow-deputies, Odijck and Van Gent, awaited him. Odijck at once said he could have nothing to do with offering the Generality Lands to Louis, thus 'stripping Zeeland to its 'shirt.' As Zeeland's representative, he could not sanction a policy which his province had disapproved. De Groot was thus faced with division among his colleagues. Next day's interview with Louvois and Pomponne promised to be unsatisfactory from every point of view. Yet neither De Groot nor Odijck was prepared for the scene which actually took place.

De Groot, on meeting Louvois the next morning, began by offering the town of Maastricht, an indemnity of six million livres, 'and such lands and fortresses in the Generality as 'might suit the King and not be disadvantageous to this State '(the Republic).' Louvois merely laughed the suggestion aside, and De Groot immediately offered, without conditions, 'the whole district of the Generality and ten million livres.' Louvois said that he would consult the King, and he returned to Zeist, where Louis was, in order to do so.

De Groot's offer included all and more than all of what Louis needed to complete his design of conquering the Spanish Netherlands and, in time, of ruining the Dutch Republic at his pleasure. France would possess a great wedge of territory immediately between the two powers she was

[1] De Groot to Wicquefort, April 3, 1674; Krämer, *Lettres de Pierre de Groot.*

determined to destroy. 'It gave to Louis, says Mignet, 'all the country which separated the United Provinces from 'the Spanish Netherlands, from the Meuse to the mouths of 'the Scheldt; it gave him Maastricht, Venlo, Stevenswerd, 'Bois-le-Duc, Ravenstein, Breda, Steenbergen, Bergen-op-'Zoom, Hulst, Sluys. It placed a victorious France between 'the despoiled Republic and the isolated territory of Spain. 'Thereby it wiped out Holland and inevitably brought nearer 'the approaching incorporation of the whole of Spanish 'Flanders into the French monarchy.' Had Louis accepted this offer, the deliverance of Europe from French dominion might have been postponed for half a century. The possession of Sluys would mean another opening on the sea, the control of the channels of Zeeland, of the Scheldt—in time, probably, of the whole Belgian seaboard: Europe would soon be faced with a situation resembling that which Napoleon brought upon her. In the words of Louvois' admiring, but discriminating, biographer, 'les rèves les plus hardis de 'Henri IV, de Richelieu et de Mazarin étaient dépassés.' [1]

Among the cities of the Generality which would thus pass into French hands was a large domain of the Prince of Orange —the barony of Breda. It included the towns of Breda, Bergen-op-Zoom, Willemstad and Steenbergen. This domain De Groot was proposing to hand over to France without even consulting its real owner, the Prince of Orange. It was a dangerous deed and one that cost De Groot dear, for William never forgave it. When De Groot informed him, as he passed through his camp, that the States had resolved to offer some of the Generality towns, William made no comment, but he wrote on the same day to the States of Holland a letter asking for their authorisation for him to treat in his own name with the King of France for the safety of his territories. The States, after some demur, granted him his request. He took this step not, as Mignet conjectures, because he was temporarily 'entraîné par la faiblesse générale,' but because he wished to

[1] Rousset, *Vie de Louvois*, i.

remind the States of the existence of domains in the Generality which were not their property. A suspicion that De Groot might begin to barter them without his leave, in his anxiety to conclude a peace, had taken hold of his mind. A few weeks later, when the sovereign power of the State was placed in his hands, he took care that De Groot should feel the unpleasant consequences of his blunder.[1]

The offer of the entire Generality, though more than De Groot had hoped would be demanded, was less than Louvois was determined to exact. Louvois was almost drunk with the successes of the last few days. He believed the States would yield whatsoever was demanded of them. He therefore told the ambassadors to meet him again at Amerongen in the afternoon (it was June 29), when they would receive the King's reply. In the intervening hours, his 'disastrous ascendancy' over the mind of Louis procured the rejection of the Dutch offer, and the substitution of a list of demands so overwhelming that they are worthy of some monstrous king in a legend rather than the rational monarch of a European state. Pomponne urged the acceptance of the Dutch offers, as giving the King all and more than he could desire, but Louis would not listen to him. Louvois accordingly returned to Amerongen with the new proposals.

In addition to what the States had offered, he demanded for the King of France the forts of Nijmegen, Knodsenburg and Schenkenschans; the whole of the Province of Gelderland on the left bank of the Rijn (*i.e.* the Betuwe); the 'Island' of Bommel with its fortresses, Saint-André, Crèvecœur and Loevestein, the town of Delfzijl (in Groningen) and the lordships Grave and Meurs on the Meuse, which belonged to the Prince of Orange, whom the States were to indemnify for their loss. In addition to these territorial demands, the Dutch were to withdraw all commercial edicts which had laid duties

[1] Vivien en Hop, pp. 151–5. William's letter is quoted in Wagemaar, xiv.

or embargoes on French imports since 1662; the Roman Catholic religion was to be exercised in public; the priests were to be paid by the State, and the garrisons were to be withdrawn from the towns in Cleves. Twenty-four million livres were demanded as an indemnity for war expenses, and every year an embassy was to be sent to the Court of France bearing a gold medal with an inscription thanking the King for his clemency in sparing the Republic any territory at all.

The towns of Breevoort, Borculo and Grol were to be delivered to the Bishop of Münster, the King's ally. Delfzijl, an unimportant port in the estuary of the Eems, was subsequently to be handed over to Charles II in lieu of Sluys and Cadsand, which had been promised him in the Treaty of Dover. Louis, indeed, had no intention of establishing England on the Zeeland islands. He wrote to Colbert Croissy, the Ambassador in England, on June 23: 'It is important, in separating two 'powers which are legitimately suspect to me [*i.e.* the Republic 'and Spain] not to reunite them in any way, as might happen 'by some future accident, by establishing a third power '[England] on land.'[1] These words, coolly overriding the most solemn obligations, are the measure of Louis's opinion of Charles II. He regarded him as a convenient tool to whom he owed neither wages nor reward.

In vain De Groot pointed out that the State in its ruined condition could never pay twenty-four millions, and that, if the Betuwe passed to France, the conquered provinces would scarcely be worth restoring to the Republic. Those, said Louvois, were His Majesty's terms, to be accepted or refused as a whole. De Groot, even with his full powers, dared not conclude without once more reporting to the States. If they were accepted, the Republic was broken in territory, in commerce, in religion and in freedom. She would sink to being a vassal state of France, who would maintain or extinguish her existence at her own convenience. De Groot returned, perplexed and discouraged, to the Hague on June 29, having

[1] Mignet, iv. p. 35.

been granted four days in which to obtain the consent of the States-General to the conditions of peace. The French camp was somewhat taken aback by his departure, for everyone had been confident that a victorious peace would there and then be concluded. Godolphin wrote that very day to England: 'ʼTis so taken for granted that peace will be made that nobody 'has even offered to make one conjecture where the army 'should march next.'[1] However, De Groot's return was expected very soon, and the French abandoned conquest in the easy hope of presently obtaining all they desired without the trouble of further fighting.

Meanwhile, the States of Holland had met on the morning of June 27. The members who had been absent on the 26th had now returned, among them the three Deputies of Amsterdam. The debate was continued in the hope of wringing from Amsterdam consent to the mission of De Groot—for the irregularities of yesterday's proceedings weighed uncomfortably on the minds of those who had forced the issue. Amsterdam at first maintained a stern silence, but at last Hop rose and said that as the affair had been decided in her absence, Amsterdam would not make any comment, save that the instructions of his principals were 'for defence and not for the acceptance 'of impossible conditions; the *plein pouvoir* would implicate the 'whole country and this Province in a servile subjection. If, 'however, it was merely a question of giving up a portion of 'their private property, they would consent.' This speech, according to some historians, made the other Deputies 'red 'with shame,' or, rather, with anger, at the implied reflection on their courage and honour. Town after town indignantly declared that it was not out of any spirit of cowardice that she had advised the continuance of negotiations—money was scarce, indeed, but to continue fighting would make it scarcer still; it was impossible to defend the posts; De Groot had assured them the King would be content with a moderate

[1] Godolphin to Clifford, June 29, P.R.O., State Papers, France, 134.

sum. Lack of troops to defend their towns was what touched them most nearly. 'We are at our wits' end,' exclaimed Leiden: 'Does Amsterdam know where we can get troops to 'defend ourselves? Our citizens cannot do the work alone; 'we have not a man to defend our town, neither powder nor 'shot.' Hop replied that burghers and peasants must be made to do the work and that soldiers would presently be forthcoming. He refused to give consent to the *plein pouvoir* or to any terms other than those given in the instructions from his principals. The miserable debate ended for the time, and was resumed by Leiden later in the day on the receipt of a letter from one of the Commissioners for fortifications, Van der Toght, describing the unhappy condition of affairs at Goedejan-Verwelle Sluis, where Hoorn and the Spanish cavalry were trying to garrison a post with about one-quarter of the troops which its size required. 'The defence is really desperate,' said Leiden, 'for everything is lacking; once fear seizes on 'them, people will get quite out of hand: should we not begin 'to negotiate for Holland alone, or authorise De Groot to do 'so?'[1]

It was a proposal which appealed to almost all members; it was simpler and easier to bargain for Holland's integrity than to exact tolerable conditions for the Republic as a whole; it offered a short way out of the present crisis. But Amsterdam again protested, and the subject was dropped.

On July 1, De Groot appeared to make his report in the States of Holland. No debate was begun that day for, in a crescendo of swiftly-moving events, the crisis of the year's history had fallen upon the province of Holland. The burghers in almost all the chief towns had risen at last and taken the affairs of the country into their own hands. Their remedy was everywhere the same, the abolition or 'mortification' of the Perpetual Edict of 1667, and the immediate elevation of the Prince of Orange to the Stadtholderate. The Government saw nothing for it but to submit, and after long debates, the

[1] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, June 27, pp. 140–149.

whole Assembly solemnly 'unswore' themselves from the oath imposed on them by the Edict and invited the Prince to assume in full the 'dignities of his forefathers.'[1] For three days, from July 1–3, the States of Holland were so occupied with this great change that the negotiations with France fell for a time into the background. On July 4, the Assembly met again to decide finally whether to close with the demands of France. The members met in far better spirits than they had shown a week ago. The resolve to restore the Stadtholderate, though a bitter pill to swallow, had eased their minds, for it enabled them to seek the Prince's aid and advice in the negotiations with France, and so the responsibility was no longer solely their own. Besides, for a whole week, the 'Five Posts,' lately deemed to be indefensible, had held out beyond all expectation: Louis had made no new conquests of importance. So Haarlem reminded the Assembly in an encouraging speech. Above all, Louvois' conditions had aroused in almost every member a sense at last of defiance and almost enthusiastic resistance. The conditions which they had offered—the preservation of the provinces in the Union intact and of the Protestant religion—would be utterly violated if they now bowed to these gross demands. 'Must 'we,' said Haarlem, 'deliver up lands and cities, even the forts 'in Flanders, admit the Catholic religion, let papists into the 'Government and so have a knife held perpetually at our 'throats?' All the other cities were agreed in finding the conditions impossible—all save one, and that the once heroic Leiden. She was not ashamed to urge again with redoubled querulousness all her previous complaints—the indefensibility of the country, the lack of credit, the virtual certainty of further conquests by France in Friesland and in the Generality. The end of her speech must have made some of the other members blush to acknowledge her as a sister city. 'As 'France will be master, neither government nor union nor 'religion will remain; those who advise an accommodation

[1] See further below, chap. xi.

'have the most eagerness for religion and liberty: France's 'demands are so great because she has mastered the other 'provinces, and will possibly be modified if we negotiate for 'Holland alone.' She had no supporters in so cowardly and worthless a policy. Van Beuningen of Amsterdam spoke the opinion and the hopes of the Assembly when he declared: 'Matters are far from desperate. All princes in Europe are 'interested in our preservation. We can negotiate with 'England—our interest there is better. France demands the 'cities of the Generality in order to conquer first the Spanish 'Netherlands and afterwards ourselves, and then we should be 'beggared indeed.' The only question to be decided was whether to break off negotiations altogether, or to endeavour to maintain some sort of correspondence on the lines of the Dutch offer of June 25. As no decision could be reached, it was resolved to seek the advice of the Prince of Orange. This was done by the Commissioners who, that very day, went to offer him the charges of Stadtholder, Captain- and Admiral-General of Holland. He told them that the peace conditions were totally unacceptable, and that as for the posts on the water-line, he could vouch for their being defended, and if he could but have more troops, powder and shot, they would give no anxiety at all.[1]

The question was finally settled on July 7, when Van Beuningen, in a long speech, persuaded the States of Holland to take the negotiation out of De Groot's hands and place it entirely in those of the Prince. Not only his restoration to the Stadtholderate, but the advent of ambassadors from England—no meaner persons than Arlington, the Secretary of State, himself, and the Duke of Buckingham—made this step desirable. Affairs in England had, indeed, been going badly, and Charles had at last resolved to send his ablest minister to strengthen the alliance with France which Louis appeared to have forgotten in the flush of his victories.

[1] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, July 5.

CHAPTER XI

The Restoration of the Stadtholderate: State of the English Court, June–July 1672

The time had come when the Prince of Orange was to be invested with the chief power in the State. In the first days of July the whole edifice of Perpetual Edicts and Acts of Harmony, with which De Witt had fenced about the 'liberty' of the Republic, crumbled away, and the power of the Stadtholder was restored in more than its former strength. The real authors of the change were neither the Prince, who took all but asked for nothing, nor the States, who conferred the legal powers and dispensed themselves and the Prince of all previous contrary oaths—but the people of the cities of Holland.

The disasters of the last month, working upon the political rivalries of Orange and anti-Orange already existent in the country, shook the confidence of all classes in the ability and even the good faith of the Government. Suspicion of their rulers took possession, not only of the common people, but of the well-to-do citizens and merchants, so that men of shrewd judgment and commonsense believed De Witt and his friends were 'much inclined to the French.' An English merchant of Rotterdam, by name Samuel Tucker, who by reason of his commercial enterprises was a friend to Holland's prosperity and grieved to see her brought low, thus expressed the misgivings of many of his fellows in a letter to Sir Joseph Williamson: [1]

'The greatest part of the Estates and men in government . . . expect more favour from the French King and his government

[1] P.R.O., Holland, 189; Colenbrander, *Zeeoorlogen uit Vreemde Archieven*, ii. p. 139.

than from their fellow magistrates who love the Prince, and respect the King of England, and therefore it is that De Witt and his party here have done so much by sea and so little by land, to the end the brother of de Witt at sea might gain honour and at land the Prince dishonour, the latter att land being tied up to his Master's orders, while C. de Witt at sea had all in his owne disposition. Of this there was a sufficient proof or example in the loss of Utrecht, where the Prince of Orange and the people were one to defend the place, but the Estates sent the Prince orders to withdraw and leave the place to the mercy of the enemy, in order to an old design this Estate have had to make Holland head of the other provinces. . . . Upon the whole matter, if the King of England interpose not, very speedyly this country will be all in the hands of the French, for the people's bitterness against the men in power will butt make them lay the peoples bands the firmer . . . and they will get the French to doe it in hopes with one to provyde an interest for themselves. They are like the phannatticks in England of late, envyous, slye and proud, and dishonnest and disloyall, loveing to be uppermost.'

But apart from all these unjust, though plausible accusations, there was real need in Holland for some drastic change in the Government, and the enthusiasm for the Prince was no mere factious cry but an irresistible demand for what had become a national necessity.

In a crisis such as that which had fallen upon the Republic the fundamental weakness of the Dutch constitution had been revealed—its want of executive vigour and the cumbrousness of its procedure—consequent upon the sharing of the sovereign power between so many independent cities and Provinces. The desire for a trusted leader in whom should be concentrated the reality of power at the council-board and in the field was behind the popular cry for the Prince. To this desire another hope was joined—doomed to disappointment, yet not unreasonable or merely fanciful. The Prince was the King of England's nephew; if he were restored to power, peace with England would be ensured, and the Republic relieved of one at least of its foes. The popular belief

was that the King of England was entirely devoted to his nephew's interests and was making war on his behalf. It should not be forgotten that the States themselves had fallen into the same error in February, and had made William Captain-General, partly in the hope of pacifying England. William himself, though aware that his uncle cared little enough for his private interests, was full of eager hope that as Stadtholder he would be in a position to induce Charles to leave the French alliance and unite with the Republic against the common foe of the safety of both nations. His great attempt of July, 1672, to win over his uncle to alliance with the Republic is, for our purposes, the most important consequence of his acceptance of the Stadtholderate. In his own mind that attempt took precedence of every other matter—military or political. His failure came as a severe shock to his personal respect for Charles II and left him filled with that bitter contempt for the meanness and folly of English politicians which permanently prejudiced him against the official spokesmen of the Court of England.

The men who effected the restoration of the Stadtholderate were the burghers of the cities in arms. Every city of Holland had its militia, composed of men of the shopkeeper and artisan class. Having no representation of any kind in the government of their country, they sought an outlet for their political enthusiasms by less peaceful means. Throughout May and June they had behaved in most respects in an exemplary manner, dispersing mobs and protecting the lives and houses of unpopular magistrates. Towards the end of June, however, the rapid advance of the enemy induced them to make common cause with the lower degrees of the population and with the Calvinist clergy (those infallible leaders of popular risings) in forcing the Government to accept the Prince of Orange as head of the State. The 'Orange Revolution' took the form of a series of revolts in the various cities of Holland, beginning on June 29 in Dordrecht, and culminating

in the repeal of the Perpetual Edict in the States of Holland on July 1 and the nomination of William as Stadtholder of the Province on July 3. The risings were similar in character in all the towns, but special interest attaches to that which took place at Dordrecht, because of the presence of the Prince himself and the grim incident of Cornelis de Witt. As if with deliberate irony the revolution in favour of the Stadtholder began in Holland in the city of the De Witts.

On June 29, the citizen militia of Dordrecht, joined by the 'graauw' or 'canaille' of the town, marched upon the houses of some of their governors, dragged them out to the Stadhuis where they forced them to hold a council and to promise to make the Prince Stadtholder as far as the city of Dordrecht was concerned. Three members of the Council were despatched to Bodegraven to entreat the Prince to come in person. At first he refused contemptuously, but finding that the men were in fear of their lives if they returned without him, he consented to accompany them. He was received by the citizens with intense enthusiasm, and paid a formal visit to the walls and magazine of the town. Nothing had yet been said to him about the Stadtholderate and the Governors were beginning to hope that all would pass off quietly. But the citizens were not to be put off. As he was leaving the town in the afternoon they pressed around his coach, where he sat with Burgomaster Halling and other members of the city Council, and demanded to know 'whether he were yet 'Stadtholder.' 'I am content as I am,' replied the cautious Prince. 'But we are not,' said the citizens, 'unless we see 'your Highness Stadtholder.' 'Fellows, leave us alone,' said William. But his diffidence was of no use. The coach was dragged back to the inn where he had dined, and there the citizens, led by a preacher named Dibbets, swore that they would never let the Governors go without breaking their necks until they had signed an act conferring the

Stadtholderate upon the Prince. Thus threatened, the unhappy oligarchs saw nothing for it but to comply. A paper was drawn up, in which, in the name of the city of Dordrecht, they renounced the Perpetual Edict, declared William Stadtholder with all the 'dignities of his forefathers,' and released him of the oath he had taken in February never to accept the Stadtholderate. The Prince was almost as much the victim of the populace as were the Governors of Dordrecht. He accepted without comment the honour thus precipitately conferred. But as his discomfited hosts signed the document so obnoxious to them the Prince turned to them with ceremonious deference and said: 'My Lords, I pity you.' If one thing more was needed to complete the humiliation of the proudest Governors in Holland, it must have been the pity of the Prince of Orange.

The Act, thus signed, was carried by the citizens to all the members of the Government, none of whom dared withhold his signature, until the turn came of Cornelis De Witt, the brother of the Grand Pensionary. He was lying ill in his house, whither he had lately returned from De Ruyter's flagship. He refused to sign even when his life was threatened, saying that he had faced too many cannon-balls at sea to be afraid of a bullet now. His wife's entreaties, however, at length drew from him a reluctant signature, which he followed by the letters 'V.C.'—'Vi coactus' (induced by force). Even this device did not escape the eye of the Calvinist preacher who led the insurgents. With angry threats they forced him to draw his pen through the offending initials. Then at last the citizens were content.[1]

On the same day the burghers of Rotterdam forced a similar declaration on their Council. Here the Governors were accused in the streets of wishing to give up the town to the French, and were made to promise to keep it at all costs. The Council swore to instruct their Deputies to introduce the

[1] Wagenaar, xiv. pp. 72–76.

matter into the States of Holland. At Haarlem the Orange flag was hoisted on the cross of the Great Church Tower, and the Council hastily sent delegates to the Prince to invite him in the name of the city to assume the Stadtholderate.

In Amsterdam the Government endeavoured to pacify the temper of the citizens by declaring on June 29 that the town would be defended to the utmost, and forbidding the export of grain to places occupied by the enemy. Anticipating the inevitable, the Council met on July 1 and agreed to despatch De Graef and Backer to the Hague with secret orders to vote for the abolition of the Perpetual Edict should it be proposed in the States. The townsfolk remained restless in spite of the declaration: on the 30th a number of leading merchants complained in public on the Exchange to the Colonels of the militia that the watch kept in the city was slack and insufficient. The Colonels gave evasive answers and the citizens 'returned grumbling to their homes.' Next day a crowd of militia, in spite of the remonstrances of the Colonels, stopped Burgomaster De Graef as he was leaving the Haarlemmerpoort for the Hague on his important mission, demanded to know his business, and, when he gave a short reply, forced him back to the Stadhuis 'so as to find out from 'his colleagues whether he was going with their will and com-'mission.' Burgomasters Hooft and Outshoorn were obliged to conduct him personally to the gates of the city in order to satisfy the citizens that he was going on no private errand.[1]

Wisely yielding to public opinion before burghers took matters entirely into their own hands, after the example of Rotterdam and Dordrecht, the Council of Amsterdam met in the morning of July 2 and formally conferred on William the Statdtholderate of Holland in the name of the city of Amsterdam, at the same time abolishing the Perpetual Edict. When this news spread into the town, the burghers broke forth

[1] Kroon, *Amsterdam in* 1672. Historisch Genootschap te Utrecht, *Bijdragen* VIII, 1885, *Een dagboek uit het rampjaar* 1672.

into rejoicings. Orange flags appeared on one church tower after another. The first was unfurled on the Weigh-house by the nameless author of the 'Diary,' who, on hearing the news, 'sprung out of the window on to a platform above the 'Smith's Chamber, waving the flag to and fro in the sight of 'many burghers, binding it fast in the window, and so I had 'the honour to be the first to have planted the Orange flag in 'the city in honour of His Highness as Stadtholder.'[1] When the burghers forced their way up the Westerkerk tower—the highest in the city—the sacristan went to two members of the Council to ask whether the new flag were to be pulled down. 'The gentlemen put their heads together and after long 'deliberation said that such a course would provoke much 'commotion and so sent him away.'[2] The government of Amsterdam had yielded to the will of the people and for the present had saved its dignity and authority.

Now that all the chief towns of Holland had declared for the Stadtholder, it was time for the States to make the various declarations the law of the land. The States of Holland had already conferred upon William fuller military powers than were granted in his instructions. On June 27 Leiden had pointed out to the Assembly the folly of tying the Captain-General by the orders of the political government and had demanded for him 'free and unlimited authority' over all military affairs. The States granted him that authority as far as the Province of Holland was concerned.[3] If this was done in the hope of preventing any further powers being granted to the Prince, or of quieting popular unrest, it was of no avail. The events of June 29 and 30 would bear but one interpretation and the States were in no mood to enter into conflict with the people.

Already on July 1 Haarlem reminded the Assembly that

[1] *Een Dagboek uit het Rampjaar*, 1672. [2] Kroon, *Amsterdam in* 1672.
[3] Kluit, *Hist. der Hollandsche Staats-regeling*, iii. p. 34. Vivien en Hop, p. 150.

'we have no choice in this matter, and must mortify the 'Perpetual Edict, otherwise we cannot satisfy our citizens and 'common people.' It was not often that the wishes of the 'citi- 'zens and common people' were urged in the States of Holland as reasons for adopting any line of action. But now none dared gainsay Haarlem, and the Perpetual Edict was there and then repealed 'nemine contradicente.'[1]

The debate on the restoration of the Stadtholderate took place on the evening of July 3 and continued into the small hours of the next morning.[2] Amsterdam herself proposed that William be formally offered the Stadtholderate, Captain and Admiral-Generalship of the province, on the same terms as those offices were held by his forefathers. There was no question as to the necessity of making him Stadtholder, but to confer upon him at the same time all the privileges and powers which his grandfather Frederick Henry had gradually assimilated to the title would mean that the cities would lose all the independence in the appointment of burgomasters, councillors and all kinds of officials which they had possessed since 1651. These powers would revert to the Stadtholder. Haarlem, Leiden and Gouda made a determined effort to preserve the civil government of Holland in the hands of the cities. Gouda pleaded that William should be made 'simply 'Stadtholder' without adding thereto 'with such dignities 'as his forefathers had.' But Dordrecht and Amsterdam were bound by the declarations they had made in their own cities to restore the Stadtholderate in all its ancient glory: to fall short of that would be to court the wrath of their citizens. Besides, as Amsterdam reminded the members, the Prince would be sure to ask 'on what foot' he was being offered the dignity, and would not accept any half-measures. Indeed there was no place in Holland for an oligarchy claiming to dispose of all offices and a Stadtholder claiming to direct policy in peace and war. One must be subordinate to the

[1] Vivien en Hop, July 1, pp. 163–4.
[2] Vivien en Hop, July 3, pp. 167–71.

other, or the government would come to a deadlock. And where the proposed Stadtholder was William III, they were wise oligarchs who at that moment decided to put their country's fortunes, civil and military, entirely into his hands. The proposal of Gouda was outvoted, and next day a deputation from the States of Holland attended the Prince at Bodegraven, and offered him on behalf of that province the Stadtholderate, Captain- and Admiral-Generalship, at the same time relieving him of his oath never to accept a Stadtholderate. In the States-General the action of Holland was ratified on July 8. Zeeland had already declared him their Stadtholder. His cramping 'Instructions' of February were changed, on the recommendation of Holland, to a Commission giving him as full authority over all matters connected with the army as his forefathers had possessed. On July 9 he came to the Hague for one day only to take the new oath of office, in the presence of the States-General.[1]

On this same July 4 two Englishmen landed at Maaslandsluys from the English yachts 'Henrietta' and 'Catherine,' 'carrying out the Union Flagg in the top masts and each a 'white flagg in the poupe.' These persons were no other than the English Secretary of State, Lord Arlington, and his feather-brained rival, the Duke of Buckingham. They were bound on an embassy to Louis XIV. The circumstances which led to the despatch of the most important member of Charles's Council on a foreign embassy were somewhat exceptional.

Ever since the opening of the campaign, affairs in England had been going from bad to worse. The reasons were mainly of a domestic nature and were fully described to Louis in a long memorial from Ambassador Colbert, dated June 7, 1672.[2] From this it appears that the Government was not only 'entirely out of money and credit,' but that the nation

[1] Sylvius, *Vervolg aan Aitzema*, vol. i.; Wagenaar, vol. xiv. pp. 17–88; Vivien en Hop, July 9.

[2] Printed in Appendix II of Christie's *Life of Shaftesbury*, vol. ii.

was so disaffected that if the King 'is obliged to assemble his 'Parliament in order to endeavour to obtain from them the 'necessary assistance for continuing the war, not only will he 'not obtain sufficient assistance, but even the little which may 'be given him will be under conditions so harsh and so contrary 'to his designs and engagements with your Majesty that he will 'be obliged to dismiss it and then he can hope for no more 'aid from his people.' The causes of these discontents were, first, the Declaration of Indulgence, which was regarded by both Churchmen and Dissenters as a cloak for bringing in Popery, and secondly the 'signs or rather almost certain 'proofs which the Duke (of York) has given of his conversion 'and the suspicions which are also entertained of the conversion 'of the King himself.' The latter symptoms of course augmented the popular dislike of the Declaration.

In these circumstances both Arlington and Charles had taken the French Ambassador into their confidence and had practically flung themselves on the mercy of the French King. Not daring openly to ask for further subsidies from their generous benefactor, they yet made it clear to Colbert that, unless more money were forthcoming from somewhere they could not put the fleet to sea again next year. The Pope, perhaps, or the clergy of France, they suggested, might be willing to raise a loan in so just a cause which included both the destruction of the Dutch and the conversion of England to the true faith. Colbert asked Louis to decide the future policy of the Court as though Louis himself sat upon the throne of England. 'Does it suit your Majesty that Parlia-'ment should meet next October, or is it desirable to procure 'a further adjournment? Should we strengthen the inclina-'tion of the King to declare himself a Catholic at the end of 'this year, and the pressing entreaties of the Duke of York that 'he should do so, or should we support the reasons which may 'lead the King to postpone the declaration to next year, when, 'according to all appearance, the Dutch will be sufficiently 'humbled to be unable to cause any difficulty?'

On the first question, Colbert strongly advised a further adjournment, as the King would be unable to purchase the support of a majority in the Lower House, and 'they will 'no sooner be met than they will wish to oblige him to make 'peace with Holland, renew a close alliance with that Republic, 'renounce the alliance which he has made with your Majesty, 're-establish the penal laws against the Catholics and accept 'all the other precautions which they will desire to take in 'order to ruin entirely the religious object.' This was a remarkably accurate forecast of what actually was achieved by the two Parliaments of 1673. Even if the King dissolved such a dangerous body, the members would spread sedition throughout the country so that the King would require 'very strong assistance from your Majesty to retain his 'crown.'

The second question, as to whether the King should defer his declaration of Catholicism beyond the approaching winter, was more complicated. Colbert would have preferred him to do so until the war with Holland was satisfactorily finished, but James and Clifford, and it appeared 'even Lord Arlington,' were pressing the King not to postpone the great event any longer, and their influence with Charles was great. Money however, must be obtained by some means or other, for such a declaration would provoke nothing short of civil war. 'We shall perhaps see England fall again into the same dis-'order and confusion which existed at the beginning of the 'last troubles.' Charles would be so occupied in putting down rebellion that he would be of no further use to Louis in the war and would probably need Louis's assistance in men and money for the next ten years in order to keep his throne. Colbert, in view of all these dangers, did not scruple to advise Louis to assist Charles once again financially either out of his own pocket or by means of a loan raised from the French clergy, if he could not persuade him to postpone his change of religion. For the present nothing further passed between the two Courts on this subject, but in September Arlington

definitely asked for a further loan of a million sterling from Louis, and was refused, while Parliament was prorogued until February 1673, in the hope that the Peace Conference which had met at Cologne would sign a treaty by that date. Seldom had an English Government been in such straits both for money and a feasible policy as in this summer of 1672.

Matters became worse during the next fortnight, as the news came in of the overwhelming conquests of Louis on land and the very poor success of the English and French fleets at sea. The battle of Solebay on June 7 proved the Dutch fleet the equal if not the superior of the combined navies of Charles and Louis,[1] and every attempt to effect a landing on the islands of Zeeland was frustrated by the great De Ruyter's vigilance. The war was becoming unpopular. By the middle of June the King's ministers were seriously concerned lest Louis should complete his conquests before England had gained her share and would then disregard her claims in the final settlement. These fears were increased by the despatches of Sidney Godolphin, Charles's agent in the French camp. 'I think there ought to be no time lost in 'exposing our pretensions here,' wrote Godolphin on June 23 from Doesburg, 'that at least the pretence of ignorance may 'be taken away from these people (the French), who are grown 'so very high and are really so very powerful that surely we 'ought to be very nice and careful with them at this time.' He pointed out that in the Treaty of Alliance of February there was no guarantee that Louis would not make peace before the English had secured their conquests in Zeeland, and 'if I may venture my opinion of it to your Lordship it 'will not look at all honourably for the King to content himself 'with a less part of the spoil than is mentioned in the Treaty.'[2] A few days later he said: 'We are in league with France and 'espouse their concerns like our own, but I confess I have 'no opinion of their sincerity to us from the moment that our

[1] Documents relating to the battle in Colenbrander's *Zeeoorlogen uit Vreende Archieven*, vol. ii. and *S.P. Domestic* 1672.

[2] Godolphin to Clifford, June 23, 1672; P.R.O., S.P. France, 134.

'interests begin to separate. . . . The Dutch will grant him '(Louis) anything now, and if any delay be made in asking 'there will be nothing left to give. The King of France will 'have all.' He urged that an embassy be sent at once with full powers to conclude peace when Louis did so. He would have been still more disturbed had he known of Louis's intention to pass over Charles's claim on Zeeland and content him with Delfzijl.

Some even of the English Court were beginning to be of Godolphin's opinion, and Colbert reported on June 20 that the King, his brother and Arlington were being criticised for their adherence to the French. Charles was, however, still master of the situation, and he was determined at all costs to stick to Louis as the one hope of inducing Louis to stick to him. In order to keep Louis aware of his existence he informed the Committee of Foreign Affairs on June 20 that he was going to send Lord Halifax on an embassy of compliment to Louis. Halifax was 'by no means to show any 'inclination to treat, for fear of giving jealousies,' and to express the hope that Louis on his side would refrain for the present —'the trouble being,' as one of the ministers said in the absence of the King, 'the King has yet got nothing of what he is to 'have of the conquests.' To remedy this evil an obscure intrigue was set on foot for gaining by negotiation what was denied by the fortune of war. Halifax was instructed as he passed through Zeeland to enquire of some of the governors of that province, and especially of Odijk, 'whether that 'State can be prevailed on to put itself into our protection.'[1] Shaftesbury was positive that nothing must be said to Louis on this matter, for 'this is to treat for our own share and wee 'are not obliged to communicate it.'[2] On arriving in Middelburg, Halifax heard from Odijk a first-hand account of the unhappy mission of De Groot, Van Gent and himself to the French camp. He did not feel reassured thereby of the

[1] Halifax's Instructions, S.P. France, 134.
[2] P.R.O., Foreign Entry Book, 177.

intentions of the French, and wrote his fears to Arlington,[1] being ignorant that the Secretary himself was that very day arrived at Maaslandsluys.[2]

On the eve of Halifax's departure the Dutch Deputies, Halewijn and Dijkveld, arrived in London. Charles refused to give them an audience, when they first arrived, for fear of 'the jealousy the King of France may take at it,' and the envoys were despatched to the solitude of Hampton Court, where they were forbidden to hold communication with anyone in London. Buckingham, always striving after some new thing, wished 'to aske them what they will doe for us,' but Charles broke in hastily with: 'No, by no means, aske 'no such question. Only what they have to say to us.'[3] The Dutchmen were at a disadvantage as ambassadors, as they were not furnished with full powers to treat. However, they obtained an audience on June 30 of Buckingham, Arlington and some other lords in which they made a strong appeal to them to leave the French alliance, and withdraw their naval power from 'the disposal of France and the execution of her 'designs.' The ministers seemed deaf to any appeals either to interest or reason, 'for they avow openly,' said Halewijn, 'that they have missed their objectives owing to the sur-'prising progress of France, and yet they show no other inten-'tion but to profit by our downfall instead of undertaking our 'restoration.' He came to the conclusion that the ministers were really aware that they had 'neglected the essential 'interest of England'; but that they dared not change their policy now, being so closely bound to France, and had persuaded themselves that the ruin of the Republic was inevitable and the intervention of England on her behalf would be therefore useless. If they could be convinced that the condition of the Republic was not utterly desperate, he thought they would be willing to prevent its destruction by France at the price of some concessions from the States, 'whereby

[1] For an account of Halifax's journey, see Foxcroft, *Life of Halifax*, i. pp. 74–77 and pp. 81–87.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 183–4.

[3] P.R.O., Foreign Entry Book, 177.

'the ministers here will be disculpated before the world and 'saved from the persecution of the Parliament-men.' [1]

Probably Buckingham had some such idea in his head, but Arlington was too deeply committed to the war and France to give the idea any encouragement. No further conferences took place with the Dutch envoys, who thenceforward endeavoured to stir up the Spanish Ambassador, Del Fresno, to declare war on France and England. They remained in England for some weeks, during which they had nothing to do but frame memorials to the King and write long letters to the States describing and lamenting over the present temper of the English Court.

Louis meanwhile, in order to forestall any inclination Charles might have of negotiating with the enemy, sent notice to Colbert of his own intention to treat and requested to know the sentiments of the King of England. 'I did 'not wish to admit a negociation for peace without knowing 'his sentiments and without making the same mention of his 'interest as of my own.' [2] Yet the very next day he told Colbert that he intended to content Charles with Delfzijl in exchange for Sluys and Cadsand.

It had become clear, whatever the good faith of the King of France, that England must look to herself in the negotiations that were being set on foot in the Republic. Buckingham, in terror lest the French King should desert them and conclude a separate peace, pressed to be sent at once to Utrecht to prevent such a disaster. Arlington insisted on accompanying him lest his rashness should lead to a breach with France. Charles consented to the embassy and the Secretary of State became for the time being an envoy to a foreign Power—a proceeding unique in diplomatic history. When Colbert heard that these two were going together to the camp of Louis, he hastened to inform his master of their respective

[1] Halewijn to De Witt, June 30, 1672. In the Rijks Archief at the Hague.
[2] Louis to Colbert, June 22; Mignet, iv. p. 44.

characters and warn him how they were to be managed. It speaks highly for the position which Arlington then held with Charles that Colbert dismissed Buckingham's claims to importance by merely recommending that he be suitably flattered, while he described Arlington as 'the King of 'England's other self' and 'the law and the prophets of Eng-'land.' Not a few Englishmen would have resented his being so described, but for the present 'England,' for Colbert, did not exist outside the court. Charles himself, in the Instructions with which he furnished his envoys, said that 'we 'think the affaire is of so much importance that we thought it 'proper to send you of our inmost councils and most confidence 'with us and on whom the King of France might rely most.' The Dutch Deputies, with whom Buckingham held conversations before his departure, reported to the States the true significance of the embassy. 'The Lord Duke of Bucking-'ham,' they said, 'himself confesses that the business has passed 'out of their hands, and that they would be very unwilling to 'see France in possession of our entire territory; and, as far 'as it appears, the Mission is designed for no other end save 'to try whether they can procure the voluntary concession of 'England's share, since they are here in no condition to obtain, 'in despite of France, what was agreed upon as to the portion 'of England.' [1]

The Instructions contained the conditions which the ambassadors were to offer as the basis of a peace, and these were fixed high, in order to justify the Government in the eyes of Parliament and the country. The Dutch were to concede the salute of the flag, and pay a yearly rent for the fishing rights in the British seas, as well as an indemnity for the war. 'Three 'or four cautionary towns' in Zeeland were to be procured 'to be for ever in our possession'—a somewhat incoherent demand, for 'cautionary' and 'for ever' were contradictory terms. The Ambassadors were also bidden to do what they could to seduce the loyalty of the towns of Zeeland and

[1] Quoted in Foxcroft, *Life of Halifax*, i. p. 79.

Holland through which they were to pass and make them ‘ declare for us,’ especially the Island of Walcheren, on which lay Flushing and Middelburg, the most important towns of Zeeland. The inclusion of this dishonourable project in the Instructions to his Ambassadors, making them agents of sedition in a country with which they were about to enter into negotiations for peace, reveals the depths to which English diplomacy had sunk under Charles II.

For the Prince of Orange, the Ambassadors were to insist that he be made ‘ Prince, if possible, of Holland,’ or at least Hereditary Stadtholder. Should the States refuse to conclude peace on these terms, the Englishmen were to ‘ make condi- ‘ tions with his most Christian Majesty for our nephew the ‘ Prince of Orange,’ procuring for him such places in Holland and Zeeland as did not fall to the share of England at the final dividing of the spoil. Thus the interests of William were fully provided for by his uncle, who had no doubts that his nephew would gratefully acquiesce in whatever was done for him.

CHAPTER XII

The Embassy of Buckingham and Arlington. William III's Efforts for Peace. July 1672.

The English Ambassadors were greeted at Maaslandsluys by crowds celebrating their new Stadtholder with drink and revelry amid cries of 'God bless the King of England; God 'bless the Prince of Orange and God confound the States.' Not less than 1,500 'stout, well-fashioned men' lined up in the streets to receive the Duke and Earl and their train, who after being 'well plyed with Romers of excellent Rhenish'[1] were cheered through Delft on their way to the Hague. There was no doubt of what the Dutch people hoped from their visit. Buckingham was elated by what he saw and wrote to Clifford: 'What I have seen here can be compared to 'nothing but the burning of the Rump. The States are in the 'silliest consternation that ever yet was knowne.'[2] Both he and Arlington were convinced that Zeeland was ready to surrender to the English. But Buckingham's imagination outsoared even that contingency. 'If the Prince of Orange,' he wrote, 'could be persuaded to send in the Dutch fleet to 'the Duke and deliver up some townes into our hands, it 'would be, in my opinion, not only the best way for us, but 'also the surest for him to find his accounte in this businesse.' In a few hours he was to receive a different impression of what the Prince of Orange could be persuaded to do.

On July 5, the States of Holland, at the request of Van

[1] Williamson to Clifford, July 5, P.R.O., Holland, 189. Colenbrander, *op. cit.* p. 145.

[2] Buckingham to Clifford, July 5, *ibid.*

Beuningen, authorised the Prince to enter into negotiations with the English Envoys, having in co-operation with him Van Beuningen, Van Beverningk, Dijkveld (who had returned from England with the English embassy), and Gockinga. When he arrived in the Hague, Buckingham was shown a copy of the French conditions for peace and did not fail to observe that therein 'is not the least notice taken of the 'King of England.'

It was on the evening of July 5 that Buckingham and Arlington, accompanied by Van Beuningen, arrived in the Prince of Orange's camp at Bodegraven. The English Ministers hoped to extract from William all they wanted as compensation for the war. William also hoped much from the English envoys. If he could persuade England to leave the French Alliance, and obtain for the Republic reasonable terms of peace with France, he would have accomplished that on which his heart was set—the union of the Maritime Powers against Louis XIV. He knew that if that were achieved Louis would either be obliged to make peace by giving up his conquests or leave his navy to the mercy of the combined English and Dutch fleets. This alliance William hoped to obtain by an appeal to the good sense of the English Ministers without sacrificing either territory or cities.

It would seem from the report of the English ambassadors,[1] that William lost no time in giving vent to his indignation on the subject of England's participation in the war. He saw them first alone,[2] and they endeavoured to appease him by pointing out that his own interests were safe with the King of England. They asked him what hope he had that the Dutch would be able to resist a total overthrow. He reminded them that the Emperor and the Elector of Brandenburg were marching to the relief of the Republic and would soon be creating a diversion on the Eastern frontiers.[3] From this he

[1] Buckingham and Arlington to Clifford, July 8, P.R.O. Holland, 189.
[2] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, pp. 188–90; Report of Van Beuningen.
[3] The treaty of alliance between Brandenburg and the Empire had been signed at Berlin, on June 23, see above, p. 115.

rushed into the heart of the matter, implored them to break with the French and force them to moderate their terms, 'exclaiming against the exorbitance of their demands.' 'We 'would rather die a thousand deaths than submit to them,' he said. The ambassadors replied they would do their best to soften matters, but reminded him that they must also 'find 'our accompt in the adjustment.' They proceeded to demand the surrender of some of the chief Zeeland towns as 'cau- 'tionary' to the fulfilment of all the other English conditions. They hoped that the word 'cautionary' would 'make oure 'termes goe downe the more easily.' To their surprise they were met with a firm refusal. William said he was sure the States would never give them and that he could not in conscience advise them to do so. They then tempted him on the point of personal interest, telling him that both Kings would gladly guarantee him in establishing an absolute sovereignty over the remainder of the Republic, securing him 'from abroad and at home from all danger.'

They could not have made a more mistaken offer. Not only was William 'not by nature very timid' (as he later told Arlington), but his whole being was in revolt against 'holding 'anything by apron-strings.'[1] As afterwards he refused to accept authority or position in England if delegated to him from his wife, so now he put aside the offer of an easy sovereignty at the hands of the destroyers of his country, Charles of England and Louis of France. That very day he had accepted the Stadtholderate of Holland from a Government who could no longer exist without him. Coldly he told the English ambassadors that 'he liked better the condicion of 'Stadtholder which the States had given him, and that he 'believed himself obliged in conscience and honour not to 'prefer his interest above his obligation.'[2]

William then called in Van Beuningen and Van Beverningk. The discussion continued late into the night and was resumed

[1] See his conversations with Burnet during the Convention Parliament, 1688–9, Burnet, iii. p. 374, ed. 1823.

[2] Buckingham to Clifford, July 8, P.R.O., Holland, 189. Colenbrander, *op. cit.*

next morning. William pressed his demands again in the presence of the States Deputies, 'with a multitude of argu-'ments drawn from morality and conscience which took up a 'great deal of time that evening,' as the Envoys recorded in their official despatch to Clifford. It is probable that his discourse was not without its effect on Buckingham. The Duke was anxious to make a name for himself and felt that Arlington and the French Alliance were the main obstacles in his path. Though we are indebted only to the erratic pen of Burnet for an account of Buckingham's part in the affair (for naturally no mention was made of it in the despatches to England), nothing is more likely than that he attempted to shake himself free of Arlington's superiority and conclude a peace in spite of the Secretary. Burnet (who gives as his authority the Prince's spoken word in after years) says that, while William was speaking, Buckingham 'broke out in an 'oath which was his usual style, and said the Prince was in the 'right; and so offered to sign a peace immediately with the 'Prince.' In spite of Arlington's protests, Buckingham persisted, William took him at his word, and set about pre-paring articles. He believed if he could have drawn them up that night the Duke would have signed them without further trouble, but they were not to be prepared in a hurry. By the next morning the fickle Duke had changed his mind. Not only did Arlington throw the whole weight of his influence against concluding a peace without the French, but the stiffness of the Dutch terms was unpalatable to the Duke. They refused to give up any towns or territory to the English; Van Beuningen pointed out that since the Prince was Stadt-holder the King of England would find in him 'better security 'than in twelve cities.' The English might keep any ships they had taken since the war began, but they could have nothing else.

Having failed to conclude a peace, William endeavoured to persuade the Envoys to speak for the Republic to the King of France. The French terms, he said, were absolutely

unacceptable ; the King must be induced to leave the Republic its frontiers and withdraw his armies immediately. The States would cede him Maastricht and evacuate the towns in Cleves up to and including Schenkenschans, but no more. Would the English undertake to exact fair conditions for the Republic from France, and, if Louis refused, make good their endeavours by joining their forces with those of the Dutch? Here was another and more hopeful method of achieving that coveted alliance. The English would make no promises, but they said they would do their best at the French camp to obtain a modification of the conditions which Louvois had presented to De Groot.[1]

This was as far as the negotiations went, but Buckingham had not yet done with the Prince. In the intervals of that night's conferences he could not but observe how William was unsupported in his obstinate refusal of his uncle's aid by all save his 'natural enemies', the States, represented by Van Beuningen and Van Beverningk. 'All the young men about 'him were of a contrary mind, and whether wee would or noe 'wee heard them wishing there were a dozen of the States 'hanged soe the country had peace and the Prince were sover-'eign of it.'[2] Such were the sentiments of the young Dutch nobles and officers of the Prince's camp who had nothing to lose by the overthrow of the States party. Next morning, as the ambassadors were about to leave for the French camp, the Duke made another attempt to bend the Prince's resolution. He pressed him to trust the King of England and put his affairs entirely into his uncle's hands. William 'cut him short' by saying again that his country had trusted him and he would 'never deceive nor betray them for any base ends of his own.' Buckingham was nettled at such a reply, and told him impatiently to stop thinking of his country for it was already lost or would be as soon as the floods were frozen. William

[1] See Van Beuningen's report to the States of Holland in Vivien en Hop, *op. cit.*, pp. 188–90, and in Wagenaar, xiv. pp. 108–9.

[2] Despatch of Buckingham and Arlington to Clifford, July 8, P.R.O., Holland, 189. Colenbrander, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

did not answer him, and the Duke, losing his temper in a childish determination not to be treated as a nobody, almost shouted at the Prince: 'It is lost! Do not you see it is lost?' Goaded beyond endurance by such insolence the Prince rapped out an answer which at length silenced the Duke's garrulousness. 'My lord,' he said, 'my country is 'indeed in danger, but there is one way never to see it lost, and 'that is to die in the last ditch.'[1]

Buckingham and Arlington departed to find Louis at Zeist, leaving William bitter and disappointed at the failure of his appeals. Before they left, William consulted with them whether it would be advisable to despatch an envoy to England on his own account. A personal appeal to his uncle might be of some avail. He asked the Englishmen to write to Charles recommending such a negotiation. They excused themselves from any participation in making 'peace 'upon the aforesaid grounds of honour and conscience,'[2] but William had no sooner taken leave of them than he despatched one of his personal servants, Van Reede van Schonouwen, with letters to Charles, informing him of his elevation to the Stadtholderate and beseeching him to intervene on behalf of the Republic before she was totally overwhelmed. The States-General had not yet given him powers to treat in his own name, but he was confident of obtaining them as soon as he wished.[3] The answer was long in coming, and meanwhile events in Holland followed fast on one another.

When the English envoys arrived at the French camp to the east of Utrecht, they found Louvois and the King still confidently expecting the return of De Groot from the States-

[1] The earliest record I can find of these famous words occurs in an English *Life of William III* published in 1703, in which the word 'dike' is used instead of 'ditch.' Burnet tells the story as I have given it in the text. There is, of course, no trace of it in the official letters of the English Ambassadors, as it did not redound to their credit. Its authenticity must rest on its own merits. It certainly epitomises in an admirable manner Buckingham's arrogance and William's mood of unbending independence.

[2] Arlington and Buckingham to Clifford, July 8. Colenbrander, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

[3] Fruin, *Verspreide Geschriften*, vol. iv., '*Willem III en zyn geheime onderhandelingen met Karel II in* 1672,' p. 349.

General to conclude peace on the terms which France had offered.[1] The possibility that the Dutch would reject their proposals, or that the elevation of the Prince of Orange to the Stadtholderate would be an obstacle to peace, seems never to have occurred to the French. All that remained to be done was to settle with the English what demands were to be made in the name of Charles.

Buckingham and Arlington were by no means pleased to be joined at the French camp by Lord Halifax, whose embassy they had so hastily superseded. He had received no official notice of their arrival in Holland, and on leaving Middelburg had proceeded straight to the Prince's camp at Bodegraven, where he learnt, to his astonishment, that the English Secretary and the Duke of Buckingham had left but a few hours before. It is probable, from Halifax's attitude during the following negotiations with the French, that he had some serious conversation with William before proceeding to Utrecht. He was in no mood to surrender his mission tamely to the other two lords (to whom he wrote at once announcing his speedy approach),[2] and it is unlikely that William would have allowed this opportunity for impressing his views on so acute a politician as Halifax to slip through his fingers. Halifax was already known as a man of liberal views who had looked with disapproval on the war, though he now acquiesced in it.[3] William must have urged him to use what influence he could with his colleagues on behalf of the States. Whatever may have passed at Bodegraven between William of Orange and the great Trimmer, it is certain that, in the ensuing conferences at the French camp, Halifax stood firm for moderate terms and a speedy peace. Williamson, the secretary to the embassy, has recorded in his memoir of that time the lively differences which took place between the three lords;[4] 'E. Hallifax

[1] Louvois to Le Tellier, July 4, Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, vol. i.
[2] Foxcroft, *Life of Halifax*, i. p. 88.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 71. Halifax of course knew nothing of 'the great design.'
[4] S.P. Foreign: Holland; quoted Foxcroft, i. p. 92.

'was for a little money and few places etc. A Peace would be 'so happy, so grateful, so necessary to the nation.' His plea found no acceptance, however, with Buckingham, who was determined to stake all on the most extravagant demands, and Arlington, though inclined to more moderate courses, felt too much bound to the French to embark on a peace policy now. He and Buckingham would not take Halifax with them in their conversations with the French, though they consulted with him in private. He remains, therefore, an honourable though powerless figure, deprived of any effective function in one of the most discreditable episodes in the history of English diplomacy.

After a preliminary audience with Louis, Arlington and Buckingham were closeted with Louvois and Pomponne on the morning of July 9 for three hours. It does not appear from their report of the proceedings that they made any attempt to carry out their promise to William and endeavour to soften the rigour of the French demands. Louvois easily convinced them of their 'moderateness,' in view of the conquests already made and those which were to follow, and how 'by them the King left the States the intire possession of the 'Seaven Provinces'—a most blatant falsehood, since large portions of Gelderland and Overijssel were asked for, besides the Generality and the county of Maastricht. Louvois found it scarcely more difficult to persuade the King of England's Ministers to moderate their claims on Zeeland. The States, he pointed out, would never consent to such a dismemberment of their territory; it would be better to make the English demands consist of sums of money for the North Sea fisheries and the salute of the flag, for which a few places in Zeeland might be ceded 'cautionarily and by way of security for their 'performance.' The Englishmen acquiesced in this arrangement, being privately assured, partly by Lord Halifax, who had come through Zeeland, partly by their own observations, that Zeeland would declare for King Charles as soon

as the Dutch fleet could be 'disabled or destroyed.' They had no scruples about making such arrangements apart from France, for they considered that 'the King may as well receive 'overtures and accept of Zeeland, as the French King did 'Utrecht, Overijssel, Gheldre, or any one towne he came 'before.'[1] But the defection of Zeeland, they knew, would only be possible 'if the Prince of Orange would be so reason-'able as to concur therein,' 'his influence being paramount 'in all the towns,' and as yet he had shown no signs of such 'reasonableness.' They hoped, however, in spite of the interview of the 5th, to be able to persuade William to this course by means of a secret offer to be made him in the names of the Kings of France and England.

It was decided at the French camp that William should be given the hereditary sovereignty of the Seven Provinces, in return for which he would undertake to get the States to make peace on the terms jointly desired by England and France, and to see that the 'cautionary' places in Zeeland should ultimately remain in England's hands. This bargain was to be concluded at once, before the English terms were delivered to the States-General, and three Englishmen who had come over with Buckingham and Arlington—Jermyn, Sir Gabriel Sylvius and Seymour[2]—were despatched next day to the Prince's camp bearing with them this monstrous bribe in the form of a declaration drawn up in the Prince's name, and awaiting only his signature, promising to obtain peace for the Allies as they desired in return for the hereditary sovereignty.[3]

They arrived at Bodegraven on July 10. On the 7th the States of Holland had met to examine the King of France's terms delivered to De Groot, the discussion of which had been delayed by the affair of the Stadtholderate. Some towns

[1] Williamson's *Diary*, Colenbrander, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

[2] Henry Jermyn, afterwards Lord Dover, a Roman Catholic in the service of the Duke of York. He carried the Prince of Wales to Portsmouth in November 1688. Sir Edward Seymour, Speaker of the House of Commons in the Parliament of 1673: he was one of the first gentlemen to join William III after his landing at Torbay in 1688.

[3] A copy of this document is in the Record Office, S.P. Holland, 190.

were still in favour of treating; Dordrecht even found it advisable 'to let Gelderland and Overijssel go,' and if necessary conclude peace for Holland alone. Van Beuningen it was who rallied the debate in a long speech. This man had now definitely taken up the Prince's point of view and argued vehemently against the enormity of concluding peace on such terms with France. To surrender the Generality would imperil Spain, and, in any case, Breda and Bergen-op-Zoom belonged to the Prince of Orange and could not be surrendered without his consent. Now that the English had arrived on the scene, it was clearly the business of the States to hand over the negotiations to the Prince. The English would never deceive the Prince, for was he not their future King? They were 'of good intentions,' and had promised to obtain a modification of the French demands. The Prince had already declared his opinion that the French King's terms were unacceptable; he was already authorised to negotiate with the English in the name of the whole Union; such authorisation must replace De Groot's, whose mission was thereby cancelled. Van Beuningen even commented in a personal manner on De Groot's unfitness to continue as an ambassador—he was 'suspected by the people,' and had already offered more than he ought. Finally, all Europe was awakening in alarm at the peril threatened to Holland; let the States lay aside their fears and become wise men once more.[1]

It is easy to see that Van Beuningen was acting deliberately as spokesman of the Prince, probably by William's own orders. He was also, as an Amsterdammer, having his revenge for the slight which his city had sustained when De Groot was despatched in his absence. The Assembly knew that De Groot's negotiation was so discredited among the people that it would be most dangerous to continue it, especially since William had stepped to the head of affairs. De Groot was requested next day to return to the French camp and break

[1] Vivien en Hop, pp. 193–5, July 7.

it off. Three days later he asked to be excused from the obligation. On returning to Rotterdam he had been with difficulty saved from the hands of the mob, who knew him only as the man who had nearly succeeded in selling the country to the hated French. Next to De Witt, he was the most unpopular man in Holland.

The Prince now awaited with anxiety the result of the visit of Buckingham and Arlington to the French camp. He undoubtedly hoped something from their mediation, as is evident from Van Beuningen's speech, and later from his behaviour to Sylvius. When he understood the purport of the offer which was sent to him in the name of the two Kings, he felt the bitterest anger. Nothing is more exasperating to a proud man than to be treated by dishonourable or unscrupulous people as if he were one of themselves. He told Sir Gabriel Sylvius that he had taken the oath as Stadtholder of Holland and Zeeland but yesterday (it was the 10th of July), and that he preferred that position to that which was offered him by the two Kings. Sylvius, with daring effrontery, taunted him with the reminder that he had already broken his oath of February never to accept a Stadtholderate, and therefore might reasonably do so again. It is said that at this insult William's anger nearly overcame him, but he controlled himself and told Sylvius that the States who had passed the law against his assumption of power had the right to repeal it, that they had done so, and that consequently he was relieved of his oath. He added that rather than sign the ruin of the Republic and receive the sovereignty at the hands of his enemies, 'he would embark with his friends for the Colonies 'and never see Holland again.'[1] With these words he identified himself with the Dutch cause. He had called the Kings his enemies who were seeking to seduce his loyalty and honour.

To Buckingham and Arlington he wrote, in the heat of his

[1] This account of the interview is based on Basnage, *Annales*, ii. p. 255, and Wicquefort, iv. p. 447.

anger, the following letter, despatching it at once by the hands of Sylvius and Jermyn : [1]

'Gentlemen.—I have received from the hands of Messrs. Germain, Seymour and Silvius, the letter which you were pleased to write to me on the 9th of this month, but as I was expecting to hear from their mouth the results of your good offices in disposing the King of France to accept the conditions of peace which I had proposed to you, and with which you willingly charged yourselves, I was surprised to find they had nothing to tell me on that head, and that all their discourses with me had no aim but to persuade me that we in this country must needs end the war under the conditions which it is desired to impose upon us. I refer you to what I have told them on the point, and I will frankly avow to you that it is neither our interest nor our intention to carry the negotiation any further. But, as it is not reasonable that the State should declare itself on the conditions under which it might make peace unless these are presented in one offer from the two Kings alike, I must ask you to let me have them as soon as possible, in order that we may take such resolutions upon them as we may judge convenient.'

William, seeing that the English Ambassadors were useless as mediators, thereby challenged the two Kings to send their ultimatum.

His resistance to their temptations produced no alteration in the temper of the confederate crowns. Rather it increased Arlington's determination to stick to France and get what he could out of her protection. Louis and Louvois now believed that if they could prove to the Dutch that England was immovable in her alliance they would still be able to wrest from the Republic the terms which had been rejected in the States of Holland on July 7. With this end in view, it was worth courting the goodwill of the English and proving to them the reality of France's good faith. Louis was by this time anxious

[1] P.R.O., Foreign News Letters, 101.

to return to France, and he invited the English lords to accompany him on his march towards s'Hertogenbosch, which he was of a mind to make his own as a final triumph. On the way thither a new treaty of alliance was signed at Heeswyck, the chief purport of which was that the two Kings bound themselves not to make peace or withdraw from the war save by mutual consent. Then followed their joint ultimatum to the Dutch. Louis repeated all his former demands without any modification. He also permitted the English to enlarge theirs, so as to strengthen their willingness to abide by the alliance. The English terms were calculated to humiliate 'Dutch pride,' which was supposed to be so obnoxious to the English nation, and to extract some real advantages to compensate for the expense of the war. The salute of the flag in the 'British seas' was demanded, a war indemnity of £1,000,000, as well as £10,000 yearly rental for fishing rights in the North Sea. Large sections of Zeeland were asked for as 'guarantees' for the execution of the other terms—namely, the islands of Walcheren and Goeree, and the two parts of Voorne, with Cadsand in States Flanders and the town of Sluys. This territory included the great ports of Middelburg and Flushing on Walcheren, and the towns of Den Briel and Hellevoetsluys in Voorne. It will be seen that it was no longer a question of a few 'cautionary towns' but of solid territory such as had originally been allotted to England at the Treaty of Dover. In spite of the rebuffs which they had already received on the subject, the allies demanded the sovereignty of the remains of the Republic—after its various dismemberings—for the Prince of Orange. They probably thought that on seeing the unshakeable character of the Anglo-French alliance, the Prince's bravado would change to submission. But Arlington did not really hope for 'any speedy answer from 'the Prince of Orange in this languishing condition of their 'affairs.' He and Buckingham left the French camp without waiting for the return of Sylvius, and departed to Antwerp, there to bully and threaten Monterey, the Governor of the

Spanish Netherlands, into giving up his alliance with the Republic. For France was seriously afraid of Spain's declaring war.

William was with Louvignies at Schoonhoven when Sylvius arrived with the terms of peace. He was about to sit down at table, but his curiosity and impatience overcame his appetite and he insisted on opening the packet at once. He first read the covering letter of Buckingham and Arlington in which they warned him against hoping any longer for a separate peace. Then followed the joint conditions. William glanced through them, and so great was his anger at finding the French terms unchanged that with a contemptuous gesture he was about to throw them into the fire.[1] Someone prevented him, and he began vehemently to complain to Sylvius. The members of the States who were present—Van Beuningen and Van Beverningk—possessed a full share of his confidence, and he passed on every letter and paper to them after reading it himself.[2] He wished to prove to Sylvius that his own interests were the same as theirs. He had now but one thought—to go with the conditions to the Hague, and speak his mind on them to the States-General. He ordered his horse to be saddled and, while waiting for it, told Sylvius the French proposals were impossible, and that it would be difficult enough to get the English ones granted. The cession of Sluys, Cadsand and Brill might be granted, but at Walcheren 'the people were so extravagant in their humours 'that they would never consent to put themselves into the 'English hands.' Walcheren, it should be remembered, contained his own marquisates of Veere and Flushing. As for the sovereignty, if the peace conditions had been more reasonable, and if the request had been made in a proper manner to the States, he might have accepted it, but he refused to consider it when offered as the price of a shameful peace. Sylvius returned to Antwerp with no written answer from William

[1] Wicquefort, iv. p. 454.
[2] Arlington to Clifford, July 21, P.R.O., Holland, 189.

to the Ambassadors. Arlington began to see that their embassy was ending in a wild-goose chase, and sent Sylvius on to Louvois with a suggestion that more moderate terms might be proposed. 'If not, it seems to us that our staying here will 'be useless.'[1] But France was in no mood to make concessions. Louis had now completed his preparations for the rest of the campaign and was impatient to return to Paris. On July 24 Sylvius returned to Antwerp with a message from Louvois advising the English lords to go back to London. On the 27th he was sent once more to the Prince 'to acquaint him with the King of France's mind.' But by that time much had happened in the Hague.

On arriving at the Hague, William asked that a special meeting of the States-General might be called on July 20 at 3 P.M. He had determined on his course of action. He would advise the rejection of the joint terms as they stood, declare his own determination never to accept the sovereignty at the hands of his enemies, and at the same time maintain correspondence direct with the King of England, in the hope that a separate peace could still be made without the tiresome mediation of Buckingham and Arlington. But, though he had taken Van Beuningen and Van Beverningk fully into his confidence, he did not feel so generously disposed towards all the members of the States of Holland. He was still filled with bitter anger against the illegal embassy of De Groot which had disregarded his own claims, and against De Groot himself for trying to barter away to France those parts of the Generality which belonged to him, the baronies, namely, of Breda and Bergen-op-Zoom. He made up his mind that De Groot should not have any part in the present juncture of affairs, and that he should be made publicly sensible of the offence, against both the Constitution and the Prince himself,

[1] Arlington to Louvois, July 20 and 21, from Antwerp, P.R.O., Holland, 189. Williamson's *Diary*, July 21 has the following entry: 'Dispute happened about the wording of the letter. That the French King should first declare if he would abate of his condicions. . . . Duke of Buckingham was for it to be said in the letter, bluntly; Lord Arlington only decently and softly etc.; *vide* the Brouillon' (Colenbrander, *op. cit.*, p. 164).

of which he had been guilty. The Prince therefore, before rising to address the Assembly of the States-General on the terms of peace, asked that certain persons whom he had reason to suspect might first be removed. The Deputies of Holland, among whom was De Groot, grew uneasy, and insisted that they must first consult the States of Holland. This was done the next morning. In spite of some opposition from Dordrecht and Delft, Haarlem, strong in its support of the Prince, insisted that he must be allowed to name the suspects, who should then be seized and proceeded against with vigour. On the 21st, therefore, the Prince was asked to name the persons to whom he objected. He then named De Groot. On being asked his reasons, he said that he would not now probe the matter, but that he had reason to think De Groot had offered more in concessions to France than he was authorised by the States to grant. There was nothing for De Groot to do but to leave the Assembly, and then William proceeded to the real issue.[1]

In a few sharp words he dismissed the whole of the peace proposals as totally unacceptable. 'There is not a single 'article therein which I would negotiate upon,' he said. 'One 'would rather be hewn to pieces than make such an agreement; 'as for what concerns my own person, the proposal comes from 'my enemies, not from my friends.'[2] The Assembly took up his words and passed a resolution declaring the terms 'hard 'and insupportable'—impossible of acceptance. A copy of this resolution was sent by William's orders to Buckingham and Arlington and to Louis—the sole reply which he deigned to make to the conquerors. He also sent a copy to England, that Charles might see he would never gain peace while he continued his alliance with Louis. Ambassador Colbert, on seeing this defiant communication, was piqued at what he

[1] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, July 20–23; Wagenaar, xiv. p. 125–6.

[2] Vivien en Hop, July 20–21, p. 226; Wagenaar, xiv. p. 125. Valckenier, *Verwerd Europa*, i. p. 722, reports his words slightly differently: 'He offered life 'and property for the country and would rather let himself be hewn in pieces 'than treat on such a foot and conclude so scandalous a peace; one ought not 'even to think of it, far less speak about it.'

considered a young man's impertinence, and wrote to Louis : 'He has not even deigned to give an answer to the conditions 'under which your Majesty and the King of England were 'willing to grant him peace, but he has sent an extract from the 'record of the deliberations of the States-General, in which he 'refers to the conditions as hard and insupportable.' [1]

This defiance, however, was not the end of the matter as far as William was concerned. In consultation with Van Beuningen and other Deputies, he resolved to keep on foot a negotiation with England alone and, if necessary, offer her high terms as the price of her separation from France. In William's eyes France was the enemy to be faced and set in her right place, and with the unerring vision of a mature statesman, none the less bright, perhaps, because in years and enthusiasm he was still a youth, he set himself to dissolve the compact which had enabled France to undertake her enterprise against the Republic. To this end Van Beuningen, his right-hand man since the beginning of the negotiations, was despatched to Antwerp to consult further with Buckingham and Arlington before their return to England, and Sylvius, who came to the Hague on July 27,[2] to England, this time as the Prince's messenger, with a set of peace conditions which were intended to tempt Charles II away from his alliance with France. With him went William's confidential physician, Rompf, who was to bring back Charles's answer to the Prince.[3] From this mission William hoped much. He was tired of Buckingham and Arlington, and the mission of Van Beuningen to them was of secondary importance to that of Sylvius and Rompf. The Prince had not yet obtained full powers to treat in his own name, but he felt certain enough of his influence with the States to obtain the requisite authority as soon as he could show there was any chance of peace with England.

Van Beuningen, accompanied by the young Rhingrave of

[1] Colbert to Louis, August 8, Mignet, iv. p. 51, n. 5.
[2] See above, p. 267. [3] Fruin, *Verspreide Geschriften*, iv. p. 354, n.

Salm, one of William's own officers and personal retinue, arrived at Antwerp on July 27. Buckingham and Arlington had been endeavouring since their arrival to force Monterey to withdraw all Spanish troops in garrison in the Dutch frontier towns of Flanders and Brabant,[1] and those commanded by Louvignies at Schoonhoven. But Monterey flatly refused to compromise either the safety of the Spanish Netherlands or the honour of the Queen Regent of Spain, which was pledged by treaty to the Dutch Republic, by any such withdrawal.[2] Spain, in this year of the Dutch distress, did good service to her old foe by her firmness in adhering to her alliance.

On the 27th 'Van Beuningen came and preached his old 'topeckes over again'[3]—namely 'that if Holland must be 'ruined they would not be divided but give themselves all to 'one, *i.e.* France.' The Rhingrave, who came more especially as William's messenger, interviewed Jermyn and afterwards Arlington on the subject of the sovereignty for the Prince of Orange. William had made up his mind that if by becoming Sovereign of the Republic he could promote, or render more possible his coveted alliance with England, it would be worth all the disapproval it might meet with in Holland. The project for its own sake cannot have been distasteful to him,[4] for the position of Stadtholder, however powerful, was at the best a difficult one. His control over affairs could only be maintained by constant interference in the election of city governments, while the States were still the machine by which all government was carried on and the body which took all important decisions on questions of policy. Although the actual terms of the office of 'sovereign' were never defined, the chief deliberative and executive powers in the State would be vested in himself and a body of councillors responsible to him, instead of in the many-headed Provincial States and States-General. The prospect of governing for

[1] Arlington to Louvois, July 20, P.R.O., Holland, 190. Colenbrander, *op. cit.*, p. 167.
[2] Arlington to Louvois, *ibid.*; Mignet, iv. p. 52.
[3] Williamson's Journal, P.R.O., Holland, 190. Colenbrander, *op. cit.*, p. 164.
[4] See on this subject Fruin, *Verspreide Geschriften*, iv. pp. 351–3.

the rest of his life free from the thwarting influences of refractory cities in the States of Holland, from which he had already suffered so many things, cannot have been other than desirable to one whose temperament fitted him to be the master of the body politic rather than its servant, however exalted. Van Beuningen knew the Prince's wishes in this respect and was prepared to fall in with them, for he saw eye to eye with the Prince now about war and peace, which was at present a far more acute question than any domestic change. The Rhingrave intimated to Arlington that though the Prince 'was not to seek nor it may be early to accept of an offer 'of sovereignty, yet he would be willing enough to take it if 'the people gave it him.' If the English ministers would indicate to Van Beuningen that such an offer would be approved by the King of England, 'certainly the thing would be done.' Arlington, however, merely asked, 'What shall we get if we doe 'this for the Prince of Orange?' and proposed some slight modification of 'the demands as to places.' The Rhingrave shrugged his shoulders, and, seeing nothing more was forthcoming, returned, with Van Beuningen, to the Prince.[1]

This visit to the English Ambassadors is important, not for any results it achieved—for William was now engaged in negotiating personally with his uncle—but for the light it throws on William's aims in this complicated condition of affairs. His offers to Charles, sent by Sir Gabriel Sylvius and Dr. Rompf, are more easily understood when compared with the endeavour of Van Beuningen and the Rhingrave to win over Buckingham and Arlington.

William's proposals were carefully worded so as to secure a peace with England which would both please that Court and country and sever the alliance between England and France. He offered almost everything the ambassadors had demanded, except the places and islands of Zeeland. Instead of these he merely offered Sluys as hostage for the execution of the other terms, which included a yearly fishing

[1] Colenbrander, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-6.

rent, a war indemnity of 4,000,000 livres, the salute of the flag, and the sovereignty of the United Provinces for himself. At the end came the following clause, without which the rest was useless :

> On condition that His Majesty makes peace with this State and does not assist France any longer in any manner whatsoever. When His Majesty has agreed to these conditions he must propose to France conditions which she will not accept, and in case of refusal declare to them that he is resolved not to continue the war.[1]

This was William's ultimatum, and the sum of what he was prepared to do for the sake of peace with England. Had Charles accepted it, and had the maritime powers united then, instead of in 1689, to put a bridle on the ambitions of Louis, Europe might perhaps have been saved many years of bloodshed, and the life-task of William III have been immeasurably simplified. Charles II chose to reject William's offer. To throw up his alliance with Louis was not to be thought of. It would mean putting himself once more into the hands of a Parliament which he hated, and forfeiting for ever the favour and the pecuniary aid of the greatest King in Europe. Indeed, from his personal point of view there was nothing to be gained and everything to be risked by adopting the course recommended by his nephew. But the letter in which he intimated to William his refusal of the terms showed a gross misunderstanding of William's own position and aims.

'Your offer,' he wrote from Whitehall on July 31, 'falls infinitely short of what I expected of you, not only in that you suppose I can or will make conditions without France, but even in the conditions themselves, which I do not demand only for my own security but for yours also. I pray bethink yourself well what will become of you, when the war shall be ended, if I have not a good footing in that country to stand by you against the designs and machinations of those that shall find themselves thrown out of the government to which they have been so long

[1] *Bijdragen voor Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis*, Nieuwe Reeks, iv. ; article by Schotel, '*Briefwisseling tusschen Karel II, Koning van Engeland, en Willem III, Prins van Oranje, in* 1672,' pp. 8–9.

accustomed, or what you will do with them even in the continuance of a war amongst strangers whom they are unwilling to call in if it be but to disappoint you of being their master. . . . The time is come that either we must seek a peace or the prospect of a long war.' [1]

So indeed thought William also, but it must be a peace his country could accept without shame. He did not immediately reply to Charles, and before Rompf's return he received two letters from his uncle in answer to his earlier appeal by Van Reede. One, in English, was in the King's own hand, and urged him to 'follow my advice and I make 'little doubt by the blessing of God of establishing you in the 'power there which your forefathers alwaies aimed at and I 'hope your ambission is not lesse for being my nephew.' [2] To such promises William had already shown his aversion in his interviews with Buckingham and Arlington. The other letter was in French, and gave some hopes of peace if the 'Loevensteyn faction was overthrown and the Stadtholderate 'made permanent.' It ended: 'If the inhabitants of the said 'provinces had considered their error in time, and had con-'ferred the same authority upon you which your ancestors 'enjoyed so long and so worthily, it is to be believed that the 'Most Christian King and I would have remained in perfect 'amity with the said provinces.' [3] Probably Charles intended William to use this letter as propaganda, and William, for his own purposes, was not averse to making use of it. On July 29 he enclosed it in a letter to Fagel, the Griffier of the States-General, with the instructions: 'I send you herewith 'the letter of the King of England, which my friend, Heer Van 'Reede, has brought me. You will please to publish it or not, 'as you like.' [4] William, it should be remembered, had not yet received Charles's answer to his own terms of peace. It

[1] *Bijdragen voor Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis*, Nieuwe Reeks, iv., same article, pp. 13–14.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 10–12.

[3] *Ibid.* pp. 10–12.

[4] Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives de la Maison d'Orange Nassau*, 2nd Series, v. p. 265.

was important to persuade the nation of his own real hope—that his elevation to a position of sovereignty would please the King of England and make him more willing to conclude peace with the Republic. The letter was not published till August 15, and was subsequently connected by Wicquefort, and other strong anti-Orange partisans, with the grim fate which five days later overcame the brothers De Witt. There is, however, nothing in the events of August 20 which has any particular connection with the letter, and any advantage which William may have hoped to gain by its publication was lost, since Charles had by that time shown his determination not to make peace.[1] When the Dutch Ambassadors, Halewijn and Dijkveld, returned to Holland at the end of August, after their long detention at Hampton Court, they brought with them gloomy accounts of the temper of the English Court. 'The English are persuaded,' said Halewijn in the States on August 23, 'that England's interest consists in the con-'tinuation of the war, and as long as they are of that opinion, 'there is little hope of peace. . . . England thinks that war is 'to her advantage, because either these lands will become 'permanently a theatre of war or will be overwhelmed. In 'either case our commerce will be ruined. We are, in fact, 'worlds apart. In England their measures are changeable 'indeed, but always obstinate for the suppression of this State.'[2]

Charles himself confirmed this judgment when he told Colbert at this very time that 'he saw well that the insolence 'of that Republic was not yet crushed, and he must think no 'longer of anything but of reducing it by sea and land to 'the last extremity.'[3]

Charles's declarations to the French Ambassador were usually more sincere than his patronising utterances to William. He really cared very little whether his nephew was ruined or not.

[1] Resolutions of the States of Holland, August 10 and 14; Vivien en Hop, August 23 and 27; Fruin, *Verspreide Geschriften*, iv. p. 350.
[2] Vivien en Hop, August 23.
[3] Mignet, iv, p. 53. Colbert to Louis, August 8.

William, however, was not even yet entirely despairing of peace with England. Late in August the States at last conferred on him full powers to treat in his own name with the King of England. Charles, on the advice of Arlington, had once more offered to 'conclude such a peace as in the bad 'condition of your affairs will be much better for you and 'that poor people than any warr can be.'[1] In September William again sent Van Reede to England with a repetition of his former terms, and a letter declaring how impossible it was to make peace with France under the present circumstances. 'There is no means,' he wrote, 'of getting the people to con-'sent to the conditions which His Majesty sent me by Dr. 'Rompf. In case His Majesty would but once resolve to 'detach himself from France he would but have to com-'mand.'[2] Charles was immovable, replying indifferently on September 20: 'After all you are the best judge of what is 'good for you and that poor people for whom I cannot but be 'concerned, for their great goodwill towards you and for peace 'sake which all good men ought to desire.'[3] Moral reflections sounded somewhat out of place from the lips of Charles II, and William replied: 'It does not depend on me alone to do 'what Your Majesty desires.'[4]

On this second embassy Van Reede had conversations with Arlington, who was in a mood of vexation and disgust at the contemptuous way William had treated him in Holland, and the obstacles the Prince had put in the way of peace—as he and the French wanted it. His only means of revenge were threats, and he told Van Reede that if William did not soon come to reason, he would have him served in the same manner as the late De Witt,[5] by representing him to the Dutch as the opponent of peace. William's fury at this petty menace found expression in a letter to Arlington dated October 7. 'Do not think,' he wrote, 'that your threats of having me torn to pieces by the people make me afraid—I am not by

[1] *Bijdragen voor Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis*, Nieuwe Reeks, iv. *op. cit.* pp. 14–15.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 15. [3] *Ibid.* p. 16. [4] *Ibid.* p. 17.
[5] See below, Chap. XIII.

'nature very timid.'[1] With this letter ended the correspondence between William III and the English Court. There is extant also a letter from the Prince to Louis XIV, undated, but from its contents probably written shortly after his elevation to the Stadtholderate. In it William tries to make clear to Louis, in very deferential language, his position and his hopes.

'The justice which this State has just done to my person,' he wrote, 'obliging me of necessity to unite my interests to theirs, I find myself bound to wish ardently, that, by a truly honourable agreement, in which your Majesty's glory would be reasonably satisfied, I may see it once more under my conduct and government, with all the lustre and consideration which it has hitherto possessed, and which your Majesty is in a position to restore to it, and preserve to it if you so wish.'[2]

'Lustre and consideration,' however, were not what Louis intended to confer upon the Dutch Republic, even under the 'conduct and government' of the Prince of Orange. His reply to the Prince's letter, if he did reply, has not survived.

All these hopes and efforts had ended in total failure. William remained Stadtholder, and at war, seemingly indefinitely, with both England and France. His uncle, from whom he had hoped so much, had failed him, and, what was even worse, had shown by his letters that he was incapable of appreciating or judging his nephew's conduct by any standard save that of calculating self-interest. William may well have shrunk from the prospect which now opened before him. How long the war would last—whether the Dutch and their slowly moving German and Austrian allies would be able to throw off at last the weight of the French occupation—whether the States would maintain their mood of resistance to which he had at length aroused them—these questions made the future anxious and the present dangerous. But the Prince was not one to let the grass grow under his

[1] *Bijdragen voor Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis*, Nieuwe Reeks, iv. *op. cit.* p. 18. S.P. Holland, 191.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 19.

feet. He seized on the advantages he already possessed to pass on to other enterprises. One possession still remained to him, in spite of the failure of his peace policy and the continued presence of the French. He still had the confidence and love of the Dutch people. With that to lean on, factions in the Government could not shake his position. He did not hesitate at the next step. Diplomacy had failed—action had not yet been tried. William III determined to take the offensive.

CHAPTER XIII

The End of the 'Vrijheid': The Massacre of the De Witts

With the accession of William III to the Stadtholderate, it might have been expected that the passions of the multitude would have been satisfied and the unpopular members of the Government allowed to sink, undisturbed, into the various backwaters provided by the Dutch constitution for those who were no longer able to direct the course of affairs. Had the Orange restoration taken place in time of peace, it is probable that such would have been the case. But war is the unfailing breeder of bitter hatreds, revenge and injustice, and the disasters of 1672 had convinced the Dutch people that there had been treachery in high places. De Groot, whose mission to Louis was looked on as an attempt to 'sell the country to 'France,' found it advisable to go into voluntary exile in Antwerp at the beginning of August. While he still lay ill in his house, De Witt was pursued with relentless invectives and accusations of every kind of villainy. 'It rained pamph-'lets,' says Wagenaar, 'against his person and government.' The more temperate of these called for the immediate execution of De Montbas, the deserter of Lobith, whose court-martial sentence was considered inadequate. The more violent accused De Witt of every crime.

The Prince, as soon as he became Stadtholder, had made an attempt to quiet the spirits of the commonalty. On July 8 he issued a circular letter to all the town governments

THE CENTRE OF THE HAGUE.

On right—The Stadtholder's Quarter. *In centre*—The Arch of the Gevangenpoort, beyond which the De Witts were murdered. *In foreground*—The Buitenhof.

of Holland laying the blame of the French conquests entirely on the 'infidelity and cowardice' of the governors, officers and garrisons of the frontier towns, and declaring as his personal opinion that no 'Regenten' were in any way to blame for the unhappy condition of affairs. He promised, moreover, to use his own power and authority to maintain order and obedience among the people by means of 'Plak-'kaats' proclaiming severe penalties against all disturbers of the peace. This letter was published, but it failed to produce the desired effect. Disorders continued and pamphlets increased in number and bitterness.

On July 15 the States requested the Prince to follow up his letter by issuing a 'plakkaat' against seditious persons. But William had decided in the interval that the popular discontent was too widespread to be dispelled by disciplinary measures, even when issued in his own name. 'The 'disorders,' he said, 'have their origin among the burghers and 'their officers, who are not to be bridled by any severe "plak-'kaats."' He suggested that a Commission of Deputies from the States should be sent to the various towns to restore order. He was asked if he would not himself head the Commission, and replied that he could not leave the army for so long a time, because if he went to one town he would be obliged to go to all the others as well. All he would promise to do was to write a letter to the citizens, exhorting them to obey their rulers and pay their taxes on pain of forfeiting their right to be considered 'good patriots.'[1] The States knew that no Commission would be any use unless the Prince himself took part in it, and the scheme was dropped. William had indeed shown that he did not intend to interfere in the disorders on behalf of the Government. The 'burghers' who were so restive were the same who had lately caused his restoration to the Stadtholderate. Out of pure love for him and utter trust in his power to save them from their enemy, they had given him what authority he had. If the opposite

[1] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, pp. 217–8.

manifestation of their loyalty to him was hatred of those who had lately kept him out of office, he did not feel called upon to interfere. To overawe them with a show of force would be a poor return for what they had done for him. To appear among them in person could have but one effect—to redouble their enthusiasm. It was extremely unlikely that the sight of him would restore their respect for De Witt.

Of all the slanders which were heaped on De Witt in these days, the only one which drew from him any sign of indignation or denial was that which accused him of peculation of public money and of neglecting the defence of the country. Accusations of heresy, ambition and despotism he did not deign to answer. He was as far removed as any prince from the 'common people,' by character, education and position; what they said of him was, for the most part, no more to him than the chattering of sparrows. He had never cared for popularity; he had never sought admiration outside his own narrow class; but he was as tender of his honour as any man, for he felt that his honour was bound up with the welfare of the country he had loved and served so devotedly for twenty years.

Accordingly, on July 12 De Witt wrote from his bed to the States of Holland asking for a public declaration exonerating him from misappropriating public funds.[1] The answer was delayed, for none were anxious to stand forth in De Witt's behalf. On July 20 he wrote once more. 'Although,' he said, 'I have always considered that such calumnies can 'best be rendered nugatory simply by despising them and 'disregarding them'—nevertheless, he wished his honour cleared of this definite and categorical accusation. The States at last gave the necessary assurance on July 23. On the 12th De Witt had also written to the Prince. His letter has not been preserved, but from William's answer, and from a covering letter of De Witt to Van Beverningk of July 12, it

[1] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, p. 207.

is clear that he asked for a similar public justification from the Prince, both on the question of peculation and of neglect of the land forces of the State in time of national danger. In writing to the Prince, De Witt made a great tactical blunder: he could hardly expect William, who had hitherto had no part in the Government, to speak authoritatively on the money question, and as for the defence of the country, the Prince had already given it as his opinion, in his letter to the towns of July 8, that the authors of the disasters were not the 'Regenten,' of whom De Witt was one, but the officers and garrisons in the frontier towns. In these circumstances, William's answer was as satisfactory as De Witt had any right to expect, but its cold and non-committal tone did the Grand Pensionary more harm than good in the eyes of the people. The Prince delayed his answer for ten days, and then began by reminding De Witt that he also, in his time, had suffered from 'pasquils' against his name and family. As for the army, 'I cannot doubt,' he said, 'that you have taken as much 'care of it as was possible under the circumstances; but the 'host of daily affairs have hindered me from examining ac-'curately what may have been lacking and on whom lies the 'blame that the lack has not been properly supplied.' As for the money, he said he had 'absolutely no knowledge of it' and referred De Witt to the States for his justification, they having better knowledge of such affairs than he.[1]

As soon as De Witt had recovered from his wounds, he had a private interview with the Prince to congratulate him on his acceptance of the Stadtholderate.[2] It seems that Van Beuningen endeavoured at this interview to effect some sort of reconciliation between the Prince and the Grand Pensionary, but there rose between them the record of a past so fraught with political antagonisms that nothing but the warmest

[1] Sylvius, Vervolg aan Aitzema, i. p. 357; Basnage, *Annales*, ii.; Wagenaar, xiv. p. 139. He sent a copy of the letter to the States of Holland (Vivien en Hop, p. 233). On receipt of it they directed the Gecommiteerde Raaden to issue a statement denying all knowledge of peculation on the part of De Witt.

[2] Japikse, *Johan De Witt*, pp. 337–8.

personal feelings could have overcome it. Those feelings were mutually lacking. De Witt and William III respected one another, but a partnership between them was out of the question. De Witt had been the servant of the States of Holland; he could never be the creature of the Prince of Orange. For he knew that on no other terms would William accept of his services. On emerging from his convalescence, he at once determined to take the only step consistent with his character and dignity, and resign all his offices at the first opportunity.

On August 4, 1672, therefore, John De Witt addressed the States of Holland for the last time. Briefly he recalled his nineteen years of service, his efforts to avert war and the difficulty of persuading a complex body like the States of Holland 'to put its hand to the plough before absolute 'necessity demands.' He went on to say that, having lost the confidence of the people of Holland, he could no longer conduct the government, 'for speedy execution is the soul of 'all resolutions,' and what was done in his name no longer obtained the obedience of the governed. He asked that he might be accorded a seat in the 'Hoogen Raad.'[2] He spoke without bitterness, almost without regret, and the members accepted his resignation with a few formal expressions of courtesy and gratitude for his long services. It was proposed to accord him his dismissal in an 'honourable manner,' referring especially to the compliment paid him by the States of Holland in 1668 at the opening of his third term of office as Grand Pensionary, when they had presented him with a sum of money as a personal gift. The Prince, as Stadtholder, had some control over the election of members to the Hoogen Raad, and at De Witt's personal request the actual resolution of dismissal was postponed until the Prince had been consulted and his approval obtained. He made no difficulties, save that he requested that all reference to the compliment of 1668

[1] 'High Council,' for retired members of the States of Holland.

might be omitted from the resolution.[1] So De Witt received his dismissal in the simplest possible form, 'and thereby,' he said, 'I find myself relieved of a very trying and (especially 'in these sad times) very anxious burden, wherefore I think 'I have reason most heartily to thank Almighty God.'[2]

He spent the next few days writing to various absent friends and statesmen telling them not to address him any longer as Grand Pensionary. One of these letters—to Van Beuningen—has survived. Its review of recent events leading up to his resignation, its striking omissions, its stately and dispassionate phrases show a remarkable detachment from and indifference to personal and party passions.

'The sudden fall of the towns on the Rhine, the breaking through of the enemy on the Ijssel and the total loss of the provinces of Gelderland, Utrecht and Overijssel, almost without resistance and through an unheard-of cowardice and poltroonery, if not of treachery in the case of some, has confirmed to me more and more the truth of what in former times was said of the Republic of Rome: *Prospera omnes sibi vindicant; adversa uni imputantur.* In so far that I have remarked that the Batavian people have not only laid upon my shoulders all the aforesaid catastrophes and disasters—they have not even contented themselves with seeing me fallen upon unarmed by four armed persons who, to the best of their ability, massacred me—but, when I had escaped alive by God's wonderful providence out of their hands . . . they have been taken with a general dislike and hatred against all their magistrates and governors . . . and especially against me.'[3]

The converse of all the 'dislike and hatred'—the enthusiasm for the Prince of Orange—De Witt passed over as though it had not been.

[1] As appears from the notes of Vivien and Hop. De Witt himself, however, in a letter to Hoeuft of August 7, says the Prince 'agreed to the proposal and had 'no further considerations about the matter.' Evidently De Witt did not think the change worth mentioning.

[2] De Witt to Diederich Hoeuft, August 7, *Brieven*, iv. p. 420.

[3] *Brieven van De Witt*, iv., pp. 421–2.

De Witt did not live to take his seat in the Hoogen Raad. From settling his own affairs he turned at once to assisting those of his brother Cornelis, the Ruwaard of Putten,[1] in whose tragedy he now became involved. The Ruwaard embodies most of what is repellent in the character of the Dutch ruling class, while his brother attracts by all that is noble and dignified. Cornelis lacked ability, and in character fell far short of his brother, being grasping and ambitious, and of an overbearing disposition. He was neither corrupt nor dishonourable, and he possessed physical courage and powers of endurance in no ordinary degree, but no man in Holland was more heartily disliked, not by the people only, but by his own colleagues in government. His best friend was his brother John, who obtained for him a vast pension in 1668 in recognition of his part in the Chatham expedition, and in 1672 the post of Representative of the States-General on board De Ruyter's flagship, with the promise of the Ruwaardship of Putten in due time for his son. In return for favours such as these Cornelis remained true to his brother in politics, refrained from intriguing against him, and was in fact a far more bitter opponent of the Prince of Orange than De Witt himself.

Cornelis returned from the fleet at the end of June, ill and fevered.[2] His conduct during the uproars at Dordrecht at the time of the restoration of the Stadtholderate did not increase his popularity. A few days afterwards a barber-surgeon, William Tichelaar, accused him publicly of conspiring to murder the Prince of Orange. On July 24 he was brought to the Hague by order of the Court of Holland and imprisoned in the Gevangenpoort, close to his brother's house. De Witt threw himself eagerly into his defence. The trial went smoothly enough: Tichelaar's story was disproved by the most conclusive evidence.

[1] Putten is an island at the mouth of the Maas.

[2] This account of the end of the De Witts is based mainly on Dr. Japikse, *Johan De Witt*, chap. xx., and Fruin's essay '*De Schuld van Willem III en zyne vrienden in de Moord der De Witten*' in *Verspreide Geschriften*, iv.

De Witt asked for and obtained from De Ruyter the highest testimony to his brother's behaviour while with the fleet—for accusations of cowardice and treachery gathered swiftly round the original charge. Yet in spite of all, on August 18, Cornelis endured torture for more than four hours while members of the Court of Holland endeavoured to extract a confession of guilt. The prisoner replied by quoting Horace aloud in the midst of his torments. Having failed to extract any evidence either from the prisoner or from the witnesses, the Court was obliged to proceed to sentence. But they dared not declare the Ruwaard innocent. The people of the Hague believed him guilty; the burghers in arms had themselves surrounded the Gevangenpoort on a rumour that he had escaped. The Court feared the people, and their fear led them to pronounce a sentence that was neither acquittal nor condemnation. Without giving reasons or saying whether he was guilty of any of the charges made against him, they simply declared Cornelis fallen from all his offices and banished from Holland. The sentence was published early on the morning of August 20. In the words of Burnet, 'The sentence was accommodated rather to the 'state of affairs than to the strict rules of justice,' and his banishment 'was intended rather as sending him out of the way 'than as a sentence against him.' This indeed is the only possible excuse which can be found for it.

The people of the Hague were not slow to put their own interpretation on it. As soon as it was made public, Tichelaar, who had, at De Witt's request, been kept under lock and key during the trial, was released. From a window of the Kasteleinij, another of the Hague prisons, he addressed a vast crowd, who were only too ready to fall in with his merciless reasoning. If the Ruwaard was guilty, why had he not been condemned to death? If innocent, he should have been released scot-free. The crowd, 'whose murder yet was but 'fantastical,' determined that the Ruwaard should not escape from the Hague. A great multitude began to gather around

the Gevangenpoort between the entrance to the prison and the Vijver or pond that lies in front of the Government buildings, and in the Plaats, the square between the prison and the Kneuterdyk where De Witt's house stood.[1] The crowd consisted partly of 'schutters'—armed citizen-militia of the well-to-do shopkeeper class; partly of 'canaille,' the off-scourings of slums and back streets.

De Witt was already in the prison with his brother when the crowd began to gather at about 10 o'clock in the morning. In answer to an urgent message from Cornelis, sent as soon as his sentence had been read to him, he had walked across the Plaats from his house to discuss future plans and arrange for the payment of the costs of the trial. At about 10.30 he left his brother and came down to the street, intending to return home. But the crowd barred his exit—'No one comes out.' Some even cried out to shoot him on the spot. His clerk, Van Ouwenaller, dragged him in again by force and shut the door.

The scene around the Gevangenpoort was plainly visible from the assembly hall of the States of Holland a few yards away across the water. The States were engaged that morning in electing Gaspar Fagel, Pensionary of Haarlem and Griffier of the States-General, to the vacant post of Grand Pensionary of Holland in succession to De Witt. At about 11 o'clock a deputation waited on the States from the Gecommitteerde Raaden (the Executive Committee of the States of Holland) to report on the 'tumult around the Gevangenpoort' and to make three requests—that the two and a half companies of cavalry which formed the garrison of the Hague should be summoned 'to quiet the crowd and if necessary to fire upon it'; that the Prince should be informed and requested to send some additional troops to the Hague with all speed; and that the magistrates of the Hague be commanded to summon 'the

[1] The scene of the massacre is still easily identifiable, with all the main buildings concerned still standing, in the centre of the Hague. De Witt's house is now a picture-dealer's. It was re-decorated inside in the eighteenth century.

'most trustworthy burghers' to arms on the spot to restore order among their tumultuous fellow-citizens. The States, with one accord, assented to all the proposals and authorised the Committee to carry them out. They likewise ordered the bridges at the various entrances to the Hague to be drawn up, so as to prevent the entrance of some bodies of discontented peasantry who were reported to be in the neighbourhood of Delft and the Hague.[1]

Meanwhile the burghers of the Hague had begun to take matters into their own hands. By 11 o'clock they had forced the magistrates to give orders for the drum to be sounded. The various companies of 'schutters,' with their white, green, blue and orange flags, began to assemble in all the open spaces around the prison—in the Plaats, under the trees of the Vijverberg, and in the Buitenhof, just outside the buildings where the States were in anxious session. It was no longer a question of only summoning 'the most trustworthy.' The burghers held their own magistrates entirely in their power. When they assembled in the morning they were not all filled with a desire for the blood of the De Witts, but they were determined to keep a watch on their movements, at least until the arrival of the Prince of Orange. Consequently they would not brook any interference from the regular troops sent to keep an eye on them. Those troops took up their station on the edges of the crowd—one company in the Buitenhof, two in the Plaats—on either side, therefore, of the crowd of burghers in arms. The Hague magistrates, fearing a clash between the cavalry and the burghers, begged the Gecommitteerde Raaden not to let the cavalry fire on the crowd. The burghers, they said, could be trusted to keep order; in fact 'no danger threatened from within the town.' So Count Tilly, a great-nephew of the Imperialist General of the Thirty Years' War, was given orders to maintain a guard on the outskirts of the crowd, but not to dissipate or fire upon it. The Gecommitteerde Raaden hereby deliberately

[1] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, p. 284.

disobeyed the orders of their superiors, the States of Holland. Their only excuse can be that the sudden increase in the crowd of burghers after the drum was sounded made the possibility of dissipating it, even by a cavalry charge, highly doubtful. But, as the events of the next few hours proved, the presence of the cavalry was a restraining influence, and it was only after their most inopportune departure in the afternoon that the murderous elements in the crowd were able to take the situation into their own hands.

During the day some officers of the burgher-companies visited the brothers in their room overlooking the Plaats. They found them eating, and the courteous manner in which John received them and invited them to partake of the meal forced them to behave courteously in return. But they would not let John return to his house. Meanwhile the temper of the crowd was gradually hardening. A certain Verhoeff, a silversmith belonging to one of the companies in the Plaats, informed the magistrates about the middle of the day that he and his friends had resolved to make an end of the De Witts out of hand. The magistrates remonstrated and pleaded, with uncovered heads, before this ruffian, begging him to wait at least until the arrival of the Prince, but he only told them to wait half an hour and he would place the hearts of the De Witts in their hands. First, however, the cavalry must be removed. This could only take place by order of the Gecommitteerde Raaden. Two members of this body were known to be staying at a house in the Prinsengracht. Several messengers were sent to them from the burghers asking that Tilly might be sent away from the Plaats. At about 2 P.M. a similar request came from the magistrates of the Hague themselves. Bodies of peasantry were, they said, advancing on the Hague from the countryside[1]; it would be advisable to send the cavalry to the four main bridges of

[1] One account says that 'the crowd had summoned the fishers of Scheveningen and Maeslandsluys to their aid' (Colenbrander, *Zeeoorlogen*, vol. ii.).

the town to prevent any possible irruption. The two members of the Gecommitteerde Raaden consented. A verbal order was sent to Tilly to withdraw. Realising better than the magistrates what the intentions of the burghers were, he refused to do so until he received an order in writing. When that arrived, he simply remarked: 'Then are the De Witts dead men'; gave the word of command and rode off with his two companies to the bridges. One company of about 100 men remained in the Buitenhof.

There is no doubt that this disastrous order was simply a concession to the temper of the burghers. The danger from the peasantry was nugatory compared with that which threatened the De Witts. If the magistrates and Gecommitteerde Raaden did not realise this, they were guilty of the grossest incompetence; for Verhoeff's threats had already made it abundantly clear to the magistrates what he and his friends were about to do. Yet in spite of these warnings they deliberately deprived the De Witts of the only safeguard that remained to them. There were members of the Magistracy who were not unwilling that the De Witts should die for the people. One of them, Van Banckem, himself encouraged the crowd. The hatred and jealousy of these men, combined with the fears of the more friendly disposed, ended in the complete surrender of the situation into the hands of the burghers.

These were now determined, thanks to the demagogy of Verhoeff and his friends, to work their own revenge on the 'traitors.' At about five in the afternoon the door of the prison was shot and hammered to pieces; some thirty burghers crowded up the narrow stairs to the little room, where Cornelis lay exhausted on his bed while John read to him from the Bible. With bitter words Cornelis was dragged to his feet and forced to put on his clothes. 'Am I, too, to die?' asked John. 'Yes, traitor, rascal, thief, you shall go the same way as your 'brother.' One of them struck him on the head with a musket, drawing blood. He bared his breast, asking them to shoot

him there as he was. But the traitors must die publicly in the sight of all. They were dragged and pushed down the stairs. Even as they went, the fire of wrath in the eyes of John de Witt cowed his jailer, Verhoeff. 'Why,' asked the silversmith, 'have you betrayed to France a country 'where you were so honoured?' 'Had all done as I have 'done,' replied De Witt, 'not one town would have been 'lost.'

But it was too late for arguments. The crowd below was thirsting for blood. When the brothers appeared they were received with blows and insults. On the spot where he had been attacked and left for dead two months before, John De Witt was shot down by the pistol of one Lieutenant van Valen. Cornelis already lay dead a few feet away. Forming a half-moon around the corpses, some burghers emptied their muskets into them, as it were in a grim salute. Then all the bestial passions of the crowd broke loose. In a few minutes two corpses were hanging head downwards from the gibbet on the Plaats, stripped and mutilated like the carcases of slaughtered beasts. A frightful trade was driven in portions of their clothing and limbs. And this deed was done 'not 'by the "canaille," but by chief burghers, silversmiths, shoe-'makers and others of like respectability, whereby can be judged 'how great a hatred possessed them.'[1] When their passion was exhausted, the burghers formed once more into their companies in an orderly manner and went home 'as from an ordinary execution,' and the 'canaille,' who had joined them in the work of outrage on the bodies, departed without any further plundering or disorder, crying out that now the traitors were dead and it would go well with the land.

At seven in the evening the States of Holland met to consider what must be done. Representatives of only eight towns were present; the rest had fled from the Hague in fear. They resolved to inform the Prince and to cause the bodies to be removed from the gallows. The Prince had been at

[1] Van der Goes, *Briefwisseling*, ii.

Woerden on the day of the tragedy,[1] and had not received the message, sent by the States at noon, until the evening. Apparently he did not think it important enough to merit instant attention. As he was sitting down to supper in the village of Alphen, near Bodegraven, the first news was brought him of the massacre, 'comme d'une chose qui luy seroit sans 'doute très agréable.' He showed such indignation that his friends 'dared not rejoice because the Prince shewed no joy.' Next day he came, as he had already arranged,[2] to the Hague, and was asked whether any steps should be taken against the murderers. He answered 'that he knew not whether to 'proceed against them with vigour; it had been done by the 'most considerable burghers.'[3] He said also that their passions were too aggravated to be appeased by strong remedies, that his letters to the towns had had no effect, and that he would not further hazard his authority. Such politic leniency loses its dignity when employed in condonation of crime. The punishment of one ringleader—above all, Verhoeff—was all that was required to mark the repugnance William felt at the massacre. But he held himself aloof, and the States dared not act without his authority, even if they would. The Prince was too ready to accept whatever was done in his name, and by his supporters, as services to his house and person. The consequence of his indifference was that people began to speak of him at once as the secret author of the crime. In the occupied territories at least this was so, for Luxembourg wrote to Louvois on August 22: 'The people of the country 'are saying openly that he has caused this thing to be done.' Some thought the Prince himself was afraid. 'Everyone 'agrees that the Prince of Orange must be much embarrassed; 'if he does not punish those guilty of this black deed, people 'will think him the author of it; and if he does justice there

[1] 'In order to see what could be done there' (Vivien en Hop, August 19, p. 284). Woerden had been evacuated by the French, but the Dutch forces were not large enough to occupy it. It was consequently occupied again by the French shortly afterwards.

[2] Wicquefort, iv.

[3] Vivien en Hop, p. 284.

'is reason to believe that these people, who to-day are his 'strength, will change their minds, and the least little stumble 'he might have would upset his affairs seriously.'[1]

Charles II hoped that the massacre would result in a renewal of the peace negotiations which William had broken off in July. His letter to the Prince on the occasion,[2] dated August $\frac{20}{31}$, 1672, shows that he thought the massacre the work of the pro-English peace party, and even hints that William himself is no longer master of the situation. 'The last 'letters,' he wrote, 'having brought in the news of the people 'having murdered De Witt and his brother as the authors and 'occasion of the war, makes it plain to me they are infinitely 'desirous of a peace; and being very apprehensive of your 'person if they shall imagine you have any repugnance to it, the 'tender love I have for you makes me again mind you of it.' In order to save time, he proposed having a joint peace conference at Dunkirk, whither 'he would prevail with the King 'of France to despatch his plenipotentiaries,' and 'where a 'peace may be speedily concluded, such a one as in the bad 'condition of your affaires will be much better for you and that 'poor people than any warr can be, whereby they may be eased 'of their burthensome payments and be forever beholding to 'you for so good a change in their condition.' Since both England and France were demanding vast indemnities as part of the terms of peace, Charles's suggestion that by making peace the Dutch would be 'eased of their burthensome pay-'ments' could scarcely be taken seriously. Sir Gabriel Sylvius urged William even more emphatically to take this opportunity of ending the war to the satisfaction of all concerned, and 'to reward the love of a people who show you 'so much, which you cannot do save by giving them the 'peace of which you are absolute master.'[3] William's mind was, however, in no way altered on the subject of peace. He

[1] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, p. 199.

[2] Printed in *Bijdragen voor Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis*, Nieuwe Reeks, vol. iv. *op. cit.* pp. 14–15.

[3] Colenbrander, *Zeeoorlogen*, ii. p. 193. Sylvius to the Prince, August 30.

would have nothing to do with it save on his own terms, which were unacceptable to Charles. There was, therefore, no conference at Dunkirk. But William was not averse from making use of the passions and fears created by the crime to strengthen his personal influence in the government of Holland.

The week after the massacre saw disturbances in many towns, culminating in most places in the surrender of the City governments to the burghers in arms. The usual procedure was for the burghers to summon the Town Council by force, insist on the resignation of all or a large proportion of its members, and then draw up a new list of persons eligible for office, out of which the Prince chose his own nominees. In this way, many notable 'Loevesteiners' were removed from the positions which they had held for years past and replaced by Orangists, some of whom, like Kievit, who replaced De Groot at Rotterdam, were well-known as troublers of the peace under the old régime.

Legal form was given to this revolution by the States of Holland on August 27. For the sake of peace and order the Dutch governing class was prepared to endure much—even to sacrifice its own supremacy in national affairs and yield them into the hands of its rival the Prince of Orange. A permanent state of enmity between governors and people was not to be thought of, and would invite the French to complete their conquests.[1] In the ordinary course of events the magisterial elections would not take place until February 1, 1673. William, as Stadtholder, would then have considerable influence in the choice of new burgomasters and councillors. But special powers would have to be given him for the wholesale dismissals which must immediately be made, 'if the people 'are not to have things entirely their own way.' William, despot that he was, could be induced to save the country from further mob rule if he were at once invested with a dictator's powers. Fagel, the new Grand Pensionary, was

[1] So the Gecommitteerde Raaden on August 26, Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*.

foremost in urging that the Prince be given full powers to make what changes he saw fit. Every one knew that Fagel was the Prince's nominee, pledged to interpret his will to the States of Holland. He was one of several statesmen whom the necessities of the time had converted from a moderate 'Republicanism' to wholehearted support of the Prince.[1] It was he, who, as Griffier to the States-General, had refused to sign De Groot's commission as ambassador to Louis XIV. There was no one now to withstand his arguments, for the fate of the De Witts overshadowed any who dared 'plead the ancient rights.' William, said Fagel, had refused to declare his own opinion in the matter, but was ready to do as the States directed. The Prince was, moreover, personally convinced of the integrity of the suspected 'Regenten,' and of the injustice of the complaints made against them.[2] He would dismiss them 'in the most civil 'manner; without the slightest diminution of privilege, good 'name and fame; nor would his action be made a precedent for 'future *coups d'état*.' With these assurances the members of the States of Holland were obliged to content themselves—William was given full powers of dismissal and nomination of 'regenten' in all the cities of Holland.

He spent the first fortnight of September in effecting the most sweeping changes. Even Amsterdam was not exempt. After the massacre of the De Witts the Government there became panic-stricken, though Amsterdam had been less disturbed than any other city by riots. They sent deputies to the Prince asking him to 'interpose his authority for the 'preservation of order in the town.' He replied in his usual manner, refusing to appear with troops, but advising the Governors to come to an agreement with their malcontents; if that were impossible he promised to act as

[1] He had been one of the chief promoters of the Perpetual Edict in 1667. See above, p. 37. Temple (*Memoirs*, p. 258, ed. 1770) says 'his love to his country 'made him a lover of the prince, as believing it could not be saved by any other 'hand.'

[2] Vivien en Hop, p. 297.

mediator and 'establish a good harmony.' On receiving this reply the burgomasters tried to urge the whole Council to resign in a body 'and with His Highness's advice put other 'gentlemen in their places,' but the protests from other members of the Council were so heated against this precipitate and, in their opinion, as yet unnecessary surrender, that no further action was taken until the States of Holland themselves gave the Prince full powers on August 27. It was not till September 5 that the whole Council agreed to put its resignation in the Prince's hands. Even then some stouter spirits were of opinion that no resignation was necessary. 'I do not know 'what their Lordships are about to do,' protested Cornelis Hop, 'for their dignity is still held in great respect by the populace; 'it is unjustifiable thus to surrender the Government.' But the Burgomasters—among whom were De Witt's friends, Reynst and Van der Pol—had been lately advised by Van Beverningk himself (acting as the Prince's 'favourite' and spokesman) that the Prince was determined to effect certain changes in the Government of Amsterdam. William was chiefly anxious to secure the appointment of Van Beuningen as one of the Burgomasters, for Van Beuningen was prepared to support the Prince's foreign policy without reserve. To bring in Van Beuningen meant to bring in the party to which he belonged—the party of the unscrupulous and ambitious Valckenier—for the Government of Amsterdam was nothing if not faction-ridden, and any change of personnel meant the complete substitution of one faction by another.

A complete list of the Regenten of Amsterdam was accordingly sent to the Prince on September 5. After a few days' delay William sent a letter dismissing twenty members out of the thirty-six, including the Burgomasters Van der Pol and Reynst. On the 19th the dismissed members took leave of the new Burgomasters, who now included Van Beuningen, though he was still absent on his diplomatic mission in the Spanish Netherlands. They were dismissed, not only from their present offices, but from all the 'back-water' positions,

namely, 'ex-Burgomaster' and 'ex-Alderman,' whence in the ordinary course of things they would have a voice in the election of Burgomasters. Nor might they occupy posts in the Admiralty colleges, or colonelcies in the militia regiments. All this William made clear in letters to the Burgomasters in reply to reiterated inquiries from them as to whether such were his intention.[1]

The changes effected by William III in Amsterdam were independent of popular clamour. The burghers in arms had met together two days after the Government had decided to surrender to the Prince, and had produced a list of grievances, chiefly connected with the affairs of the town militia. They wished their captains and colonels to be chosen from the burgher companies, for the Government was in the habit of nominating scions of its own families to these military offices, so that the ordinary burgher could seldom get promotion. They presented their demands to the Burgomasters, who seem to have had little difficulty in persuading them to withdraw them. When the list of dismissed 'Regenten' was published, the burghers drew up their own list of new members and sent it to the Prince. When he made his new appointments, only one of the burghers' nominees was found among them. William was by no means inclined to place himself at the head of a democratic movement. He allowed the burgher risings to frighten the various city governments into surrendering to him, and then made his own choice. Nor were the people really prepared for a constitutional struggle. In Holland at this time there were no Pyms or Cromwells. Enthusiastic affection for the Prince and a corresponding hatred and indignation against a Government which had kept him out of power and brought the country to the verge of ruin—these were the ruling passions of the citizens of Holland. When the Prince acted independently of them, as he did in Amsterdam, they did not turn against him. Glimpses of their relations with him at this time reveal a childlike love on

[1] Bontemantel, *De Regeering van Amsterdam*, vol. ii., pp. 192–224 *et. sqq.*

their part for this most undemocratic of princes which is truly astonishing. In August William paid a visit to Amsterdam to inspect the fortifications and magazines. He rode through the streets with Burgomasters Hooft and Outshoorn, who acted with much respect towards him, holding their hats in their hands. Returning to the city by night in a boat, after going the rounds of the outposts, the burghers on guard at the gate must needs board the barge where he lay 'tired out,' to see that all was well with him. When next day one of the Burgomasters apologised to him for the disturbance, William replied, 'I wish all my soldiers were so vigilant and careful.' Next day they pressed around him as he rode out of the city, striving to seize his hand and shake it. Many could not reach him for the throng, so turning to them he said: 'I cannot give all of you my hand, but I give you my heart.'[1] To those who came to him with complaints he was generally short and discouraging. A miller of Weesp met him as he was landing on a dyke in the flooded area, and pointing to his submerged meadows began to lament that he 'suffered 'too much loss.' 'Fellow,' said the Prince, 'that is because 'there is too much water up.'[2]

William knew and understood what was in the Dutch people. He recognised and accepted the capacity for devotion and affection for his house and person possessed by the lower ranks of society—'the honest burghers' whose massacre of the De Witts was to be overlooked in view of their stout patriotism and anger against the French. Yet he would not choose these men to govern for him. The 'Regenten,' trained by a century of oligarchical power in all the niceties of government, many of them accomplished diplomats and financiers, were not lightly to be cast aside. As he saw his life's task opening before him, he saw his need of such servants as Van Beverningk, Van Beuningen, and Fagel. The Dutch

[1] Historisch Genootschap te Utrecht, Kronijk 24 (1868), p. 443; *Aanteekeningen betreffende het voorgevallene in de maanden Juli tot December* 1672.
[2] *Ibid.*

Constitution would, he knew, require much skill and patience, and some qualities of a darker nature, to keep it in the difficult and disagreeable path of relentless opposition to France, which would mean often nothing less than war. But he preferred to maintain the machinery of government intact, attempting neither destruction nor reform after the realities of power had been placed in his hands. Those who worked for him most eagerly in the present and in the years to come were none of them, by tradition, 'Orangists.' Van Beverningk had been an intimate friend of De Witt. Fagel had designed the Perpetual Edict policy. Van Beuningen represented the lofty and independent spirit of the Amsterdam oligarchy. These men were drawn to serve William in 1672 because they saw in him the only man both able and willing to save the country from destruction from without and chaos within. Afterwards they served him because, in spite of much in him they could have wished otherwise, he upheld the only foreign policy which was compatible with the safety and independence of the Republic in Europe. It cannot be said that he was ever on intimate personal terms with any of them, save possibly, later on, with Fagel; he quarrelled violently and permanently with Van Beuningen in 1684 because Van Beuningen faltered in adamantine enmity to France. Yet it was they and their colleagues whom he entrusted with his great diplomatic missions, rather than his own relatives and friends, like Zuylestein and Bentinck. And when the day came for him to hazard all he and they had ever won for Europe's freedom in the Great Expedition of 1688, he could say to them without fear of contradiction: 'I have served you faithfully ever 'since you have trusted me with the government, and have had 'no other end before my eyes but the good of the country: 'I have pursued it always, and, if at any time I have erred in 'my judgment, yet my heart has ever been set on procuring 'your safety and prosperity.'

CHAPTER XIV

The Autumn and Winter Campaigns, 1672

While the Republic was struggling for her life during this disastrous summer, Germany began to bestir herself against Louis XIV, the new troubler of the peace of Europe. The Elector of Brandenburg took up the task of arousing the Empire first to a determination to protect itself and its borders from the military encroachments of France, and then to active assistance of the hard-pressed Dutch Republic. By the autumn it was clear that Louis's attack on Holland had provoked far-reaching changes in the temper of European diplomacy. The Elector, after concluding a treaty with the States-General on April 20, 1672, promising to come to their aid if they were attacked by France, succeeded in drawing the Emperor into alliance with him, in spite of the protestations and threats of Louis, who could ill conceal his anger at the daring of the Elector.[1] Louis's ruthless occupation of the towns of Cleves, which belonged to Brandenburg, his no less high-handed seizure of Tongeren and Maaseyck in the territory of the Spanish Netherlands, and his use of the Rhine Valley as a passage for his troops, brought Imperialists and Brandenburgers into the field against him. His boastful protests, written to Gremonville, his Ambassador in Vienna, at the height of his conquests in the Republic, only increased hostility against him. He declared that Holland would soon be fitter for 'receiving the law from him than help from without,' and

[1] See above, chap. v, p. 115.

that the state to which he would reduce her would make those who were coming to her aid pause before 'quarrelling with me 'for the sake of a ruined republic.'[1] His haughty attitude, combined with the alarming progress of his arms, soon resulted in the conclusion of alliances against him and on behalf of his victim. On July 13 the Emperor ratified the treaty made on June 23 at Berlin with the Elector of Brandenburg, promising to maintain the peace and integrity of the Empire against all who should attempt to violate it; to bring into the alliance all who owed him allegiance, and (by secret articles) to set on foot immediately an army of 12,000 men.[2] This treaty, on the surface purely defensive, was really a declaration of war, and was followed by one still more explicit, signed on July 25 at the Hague, between the Emperor and the States. In return for a subsidy, the Emperor promised to unite his own troops and those of the Elector to an army of the States on the borders of the Republic, and 'defend the United Provinces.' The story of the autumn campaigns is the attempt to carry out the terms of this treaty. Louis had provoked not only Brandenburg but the Empire itself into going to war on behalf of Holland.

William III was instant in representing to Anhalt, the Elector's Ambassador in Vienna, the need for haste if the Republic was to be saved. He wrote on July 3 from the camp at Bodegraven:

'Vous aures [*sic*] sans doute esté fort surpris des terribles progrès de la France; effectivement c'est une chose incompréhensible, mais il en faut savoir toutes les particularités, devan que cela puisse surprendre à ce point que cela doit. . . . Je vous prie de prier encore l'Electeur en mon nom . . . de hâter sa marche pour nous secourir, puis qu'il n'y a aucun autre resource pour nous que celuy-là. Je crois qu'il ne sera pas besoin de vous persuader quel intérêt que M. l'Electeur a que ce pays icy ne se perde pas. C'est pourquoy il est nécessaire qu'il ne perde pas un moment de temps et qu'il fasse un dernier effort, et je vous asseure que nos affaires ne sont

[1] Louis to Gremonville, June 25, Mignet, iv. p. 85.
[2] See above, chap. v, p. 115–6.

pas encore si désespérées qu 'on ne les puisse remettre. De nostre côté nous sommes résolu de nous défendre jusqu'à la dernière extrémité.' [1]

William was desperately anxious that his German neighbours should not lose heart or be persuaded by the boasts of France that the Republic was already lost.

On August 25 the Elector left Potsdam at the head of his army and effected a junction with the Imperialist troops in Hildesheim on September 12. Their joint army numbered about 40,000 men. Godard van Reede, Graf van Amerongen, the Dutch envoy to the Elector of Brandenburg, told William that the Imperial army only covered three miles a day ' and on ' the third day lies still to rest its soldiers, which is the German ' custom.' [2] The plan of the allies was to effect a junction with William and an army of about 20,000 Dutch troops somewhere between the Rhine and Meuse. But William differed from his friends beyond the Rhine in his wishes as to the place and time of the junction. He was, above all, anxious that the Republic should speedily be relieved of the burden of the French occupation, and to this end urged ' that the auxiliary troops should ' take the shortest way to these Provinces,' and cross the Rhine as near to the Republic's frontiers as possible. The Imperialists, however, were still afraid of clashing so definitely with the redoubtable French armies. For no sooner had the Elector left Potsdam than Louis despatched Turenne to the Rhine with an army of 16,000 men, to oppose any attempted crossing. He crossed the Rhine at Essen, and entered the county of Mark. His movements terrified the Court at Vienna, some members of whom, in particular the minister Lobkowitz, were still inclined to the French, and orders were sent to Montecucculi, the Imperialist General, to avoid entering the territories of the Bishops of Cologne and Münster, the allies of the King of France, and make a long detour southward to

[1] In the Prussian Staatsarchiv. Printed in *Urkunden und Aktenstücken, Kurfürst Friedrich Wilhelm*, vol. iii.

[2] Amerongen to William, September 1, 1672, *Urkunden und Actenstücken, Kurfürst Friedrich Wilhelm*, vol. iii.

Coblentz, which lay in the neutral territory of the Elector of Trèves.[1] This decision was strengthened by the conviction that it would be at least eight weeks before the Dutch could have a field army ready to act in co-operation. The Elector, who was at first inclined to march through Münster and cross the Rhine in Cleves, was persuaded to adopt the Imperialist plan, and the huge army began to straggle southwards through Thuringia, 'stripping the countryside to the bare bone 'wherever they pass, so that I tremble to think,' said Amerongen, 'what would happen if they entered the territory of the 'States; the Bishop of Münster is fortunate in that they are 'giving him the go-by.'[2]

William was deeply vexed at the change of plan. 'On 'account of the short days, bad roads and great distances,' he wrote to Amerongen, 'the march to Coblentz will take so 'much time that it will run into the winter, and the States will 'have small advantage of the auxiliary troops upon which they 'have set all their hopes.' He pointed out that Turenne's force of 16,000 men was not very considerable, and if the army came straight on towards Holland, Turenne would have 'to keep a look-out before and behind and could scarcely keep 'guard on every side.' If, however, an immense détour were made, Turenne would despatch some of his troops to join Luxembourg on the Dutch front and prevent the Dutch from taking any action. He protested against the idea of leaving Münster and Cologne unharmed, as it would only mean a further concentration of enemy troops in the Republic, if the French felt their allies on the Rhine were safe. A certain diversion high up the Rhine, however, he did think advisable. If 10,000 Imperial troops could effect a junction with some Spanish and Dutch in the neighbourhood of Coblentz, while the rest marched straight for the Republic, the French would be caught on both sides.[3]

William's reasonings and pleadings were in vain, and as

[1] Mignet, iv. p. 113.
[2] Amerongen to William, *Urkunden und Aktenstücken*, vol. iii.
[3] William to Amerongen, *ibid.*

soon as he found they were so, instead of sulking in his tent, he began to lay his own plans for meeting the new situation. In order to provide Turenne with a sufficient army on the Rhine, Luxembourg had given up, much against his will, quite a large proportion of the troops under his command on the Utrecht front. As Luxembourg himself foresaw, and warned Louvois on August 30,[1] William seized the opportunity of this weakening of the enemy's forces to undertake offensive operations. John Maurice, still in command of the Amsterdam front at Muiden, was very anxious, if possible, to dislodge the French from Naarden.[2] He did not fear much resistance from within the town, as it was garrisoned mainly by Swiss Protestant mercenaries who were said to sympathise with the Dutch. News of the planned attack, however, reached Luxembourg's headquarters in Utrecht, and reinforcements were quickly sent across the high ground from Utrecht to Naarden on the night of October 7. After a skirmish with an advanced guard of Dutch troops at the village of Ankeveen, just south of Naarden, they entered the little town, upon which Maurice decided to abandon his attack. 'These 'tidings,' he wrote to William, 'came to me just as the Lords 'Burgomasters van Beuningen and Hudde were met at my 'lodging with six colonels to resolve upon the day for the 'attack upon Naarden.' The presence of these civilians at a council of war shows how watchful an eye the city of Amsterdam kept upon the movements of its defenders.

William immediately followed up the failure at Naarden by a vigorous attack on Woerden. That little town lay on the road from Bodegraven to Utrecht, and, though the French had withdrawn from it for a time in July, the Dutch could not spare the troops from the water-line to garrison it. Luxembourg occupied it again in September. In a characteristic letter to John Maurice, the Prince informed his cousin of his intention to take the offensive :

[1] See above, p. 212.

[2] See his letters to William of October 4, 5, 7 and 9 in *Archives de la Maison d'Orange Nassau*, 2nd Series, vol. 278–85.

'Au camp de Botegrave [sic] ce
10 d'octob. 1672.

'Monsieur.—Je suis bien mari que Mr de Luxembourg vous a empesché d'attacquer Naarden et qu'il vous tourmente, ce que je croi qu'il sera bientôt obligé de laisser, puisque j'ay résolu de marcher à ce soir à Woerden et d'attacquer cette place par force, et comme cela sans doute il s'en retournera à Utrecht et tâchera de secourir la dite ville de Woerden. Je crois qu'il seroit très-bon que vous fissiez venir des batteaux sur le Zuyderzee et que vous fissiez tirer quelque cannonade dans Naarden, et parce moien leur donner l'allarme là.' [1]

William evidently regarded the attack on Woerden as a diversion which should relieve the pressure against John Maurice and Muiden in the north, and make it possible to gain possession of Naarden.

Owing to the adroitness and speed with which Luxembourg returned from Naarden to attack the attackers, the Dutch failed to capture Woerden. During the night of October 10–11 three columns of Dutch troops, under William, Zuylestein and Hoorn, advanced on the town, and took up positions to the west, east and south of the town respectively. It was upon Zuylestein's post, hastily thrown up at the Grovenbrug, a mile east of Woerden, that Luxembourg descended on the 11th with 3,000 men hastily withdrawn from the heaths around Naarden. The Dutch beat off his frontal attack, and he then proceeded to find his way round through the flooded fields to the village of Kameryk whence he could approach Zuylestein's position from the rear. In the early morning of the 12th, while it was still dark, he

[1] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange Nassau*, v. 285. I quote this letter *verbatim* as an example of William's French style. The translation runs:
'I am much grieved that M. de Luxembourg has prevented you from 'attacking Naarden and that he is worrying you, which however I think he will 'soon have to give up doing, since I have resolved to march this evening to 'Woerden and attack it by force, and so doubtless he will return to Utrecht and 'will try to succour the said town of Woerden. I think it would be a very 'good thing if you would get some boats sent to the Zuyderzee and make some 'sort of cannonade against Naarden, and so give them the alarm there.'

launched his attack, and for five hours the battle raged. The Dutch troops, for the first time since the fatal day of Lobith, were exposed to a heavy fire, and they stood the test well. But they gave way at last before Luxembourg's determined attack, and Zuylestein himself fell dead, his body covered with wounds. After the defeat of Zuylestein, William gave up the attempt on the town. Neither he nor Hoorn was able to force an entry into the town, though the French pursuit of the defeated Dutch soldiers from Zuylestein's post was intercepted and turned back. The attack had no results, good or bad, either way, but it proved that the Dutch were able to stand a surprise attack well.[1]

Immediately after this failure William set about co-operating with the approaching allies. 'I think we shall 'have to take some definite resolve, as to what we can do on 'our side,' he wrote to John Maurice on October 14,[2] and to this end he summoned a council of war at Gouda on the 16th. Here the momentous resolve was taken of leading a Dutch army across the Spanish Netherlands to the Meuse valley, there to join forces with Brandenburg and the Imperialists, who, it was hoped, would by that time have crossed the Rhine, and so cut the French line of communication along the Meuse. If the Imperialists could evade the vigilance of Turenne and cross the Rhine, the French flank would be turned, Turenne isolated and the way opened to the united forces of William and the Elector into France itself if they so desired. In the Meuse valley Maastricht still held out for the Dutch, though the surrounding fortresses, Valkenburg, Tongeren and Maaseyck, were in French hands. To carry out such a plan an army of at least 20,000 men would have to leave Holland. William felt justified in taking the risk for many reasons. Owing to the absence of Turenne, and now Condé as well, on the Rhine, the pressure of troops on the Holland front and in the Betuwe had been

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. pp. 146–50.
[2] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange Nassau*, 2nd Series, v. p. 286.

considerably diminished. The spirit of the Dutch troops was more trustworthy than it had been in the early summer—the attack on Woerden had proved that—and, with the protection of the floods and under the vigilance of John Maurice and Wirtz, William felt that the home defences could do without him for a few weeks. The army which he assembled at Rozendaal in North Brabant on November 7 consisted mainly of cavalry, for he wished to march as quickly as possible. The only grave danger lay in the possibility of a hard frost which would make it possible for Luxembourg to undertake operations over the flooded areas. For a month at least, however, no frost of any severity need be expected.

William started on his march, and crossed the Meuse at Maastricht about November 23. He intended to attack the French General Duras, who lay in Jülich. He succeeded in driving him across the Roer, after which Duras eluded him and finally joined Turenne on the Rhine, leaving garrisons in the Meuse towns. William found, when he arrived on the Meuse that he would have to reckon without Brandenburg and the Imperialists. During October and November they had been playing cat-and-mouse with Turenne and Condé along the right bank of the Rhine. Three several times—at Ehrenbreitstein, at Mainz and at Strasburg—the Elector essayed to cross, and three times he was prevented. The Elector of Trèves, terrorised by the threats of the French agents at his court, regretfully refused permission to the Allied armies to cross at Ehrenbreitstein. The same thing happened at Mainz and in the Palatinate, and when, as a last hope, they approached Strasbourg, they found that Condé was before them and had blown up the bridge.[1] Returning on their tracks, they did succeed at last, on November 23, in crossing the Rhine at Weissenau near Mainz, and started on their march to join William on the Meuse, but the ever-vigilant Turenne slipped ahead of them and interposed his formidable presence between them and the river. In despair the Elector

[1] Mignet, iv. p. 122; A. Waddington, *Le Grand Electeur*, ii.

gave orders to return to Germany. Ravaging without mercy as they went the unfortunate lands of Trèves, Mainz and the Palatinate, they recrossed the Rhine at Darmstadt and prepared to spend the winter taking vengeance on the Bishops of Cologne and Münster, the allies of France. Again Turenne was too quick for them. Coolly disobeying the orders of Louvois, who was jealous of his successes and sent despatch after despatch to recall him from across the Rhine, the Marshal pressed on into Westphalia, being well aware, as he told Louvois, that if he did not prevent it, the Imperialists would terrorise the Bishop of Münster into deserting the French alliance.[1] During January and February 1673, Turenne took town after town in Westphalia and at length forced the Imperialists to recross the Weser. In Hildesheim where they had joined forces in September, the Elector and Montecucculi parted company, and the Elector returned to Berlin. It had been for him a most inglorious campaign, ending in the occupation and ravaging of his Westphalian territories by the victorious Turenne. He now cared only to make as advantageous a peace as possible with France. Louis was ready enough to accommodate him, and on April 10, 1673, a treaty was signed at St. Germain. The Elector promised to give no further aid to the Dutch and to suffer without complaint the presence of French troops in Germany. The King of France promised to give back to the Elector all the towns and territories occupied by his armies in Cleves, Mark and Ravensberg. Thus Louis deprived the Dutch Republic of the one ally from whom she had expected vigorous help. From the Empire she could hope nothing. Once more she stood alone against her enemies, dependent wholly on her floods, her fleet, her army and her Stadtholder.

The Prince of Orange, when he found himself deserted by his allies, was not of a mind to give up the expedition which he had undertaken at such risk without striking a blow

[1] Mignet, iv. p. 130.

at the French. As soon as he learned that the Imperialist and Brandenburg armies were in retreat to the Rhine, he determined to attempt unaided what he had hoped to effect in conjunction with the Elector and Montecucculi. Ten thousand Spaniards had joined him in his march through the Netherlands. Duras, Turenne and Condé were still on the Rhine. There was just time, if he were quick and fortunate, to besiege and take some place of importance in the Meuse Valley before the oncoming frosts forced him to return to Holland. Having made a feint of menacing Tongeren and thus lured thither Montal, who commanded the French garrisons in that district, he suddenly swooped down on Charleroi, the gate of all Louis's communications with the Netherlands. Had he succeeded in taking it, it is probable that the war would more speedily have turned against the French, for Charleroi would have given the Dutch control of the Meuse Valley and a gate of entry into France itself. William sat down before the town on December 15. How dangerous Louis thought his action can be guessed from his hasty departure from St. Germain to Compiègne, thence to despatch the Household Troops once more to the Meuse. Louvois himself was sent to take charge of affairs and Condé was recalled from his quarters in the Upper Rhine and Sarre. It was not owing to these preparations, however, that William's attempt failed, but to the winter's inclemency and to the adroitness of Montal, who, furious at being outwitted, left Tongeren with 180 horsemen, found his way through William's lines by dint of disguising himself and his men as Spaniards, and entered Charleroi in time to rekindle the failing energies of the garrison.[1] Meanwhile a severe frost was making siege operations difficult, and the Spaniards had not sent the promised siege-train. William saw that it was useless to press the siege. On the 22nd he broke camp and began his march back to Holland. On the way he demolished the fortifications of the town of Binch. Thence he wrote on

[1] Mignet, iv. pp. 124–5.

December 23 to Van Amerongen, giving an account of his failure.

'The Count of Waldeck has informed you how, owing to the severe frost, it has been impossible to fulfil our design; without that I do not doubt with God's blessing it would have succeeded, which would have been a great thing; but against the Almighty Will there is nothing to be done. . . . As it is now so late in the year, and as I do not at present see that anything profitable to the common concern is to be done in these parts, and as it is also necessary that our troops should get rested so as to be ready for action next summer, I have resolved to return to Holland with part of the cavalry and to leave the rest a little longer in these parts under the leadership of the Count of Waldeck, and the Spanish auxiliary troops under the Count of Marsin.'[1]

He returned to find all in confusion and dismay. During his absence Luxembourg had made a determined attempt to break through the Dutch line at Bodegraven, and had been frustrated only by a timely thaw.

William had left the waterline in charge of John Maurice (at Muiden), Count Koningsmarck (at Bodegraven), Marshal Wirtz (at Gorinchem and Schoonhoven) and Count Hoorn (at (Goede-jan-Verwelle Sluis). The Deputies in the Field, whose functions had been suspended since the end of June, were again sent to co-operate with the generals. Their head-quarters were at Alphen, a village on the Old Rhine between Leiden and Bodegraven. The chief concern of both generals and Deputies during November and December was to prepare against the dreaded frosts which would freeze the inundations, make the ground too hard for digging defence works, and so encourage Luxembourg to attempt an invasion of the very heart of Holland. His most obvious route for such an enterprise would be by the Oude Rijn to Leiden, where the belt of flood was thinnest. The posts which lay on this line were therefore of the utmost importance to reinforce and defend. Bodegraven above all was regarded as vital, and

[1] *Urkunden and Actenstricken*, iii.

orders were given by the Council of War as early as December 2 for the formation of a 'reserve corps' to be sent thither as soon as possible. But, such was the delay in despatching them from the other posts, that only a few of them arrived before Luxembourg launched his attack.[1] The frosts began in the middle of December, and gravely hindered the progress of defence works on all the posts. Prince Maurice advised the erection of wooden breastworks plastered with manure, as it was impossible to break up the earth.[2] But the greatest anxiety of all which the frost caused was the problem of how to keep open the waterways and floods. Nothing but constant breaking-up of the ice as it formed in the sluggish streams and canals, and in the flooded polders, could keep open communications between the towns and the Five Posts or frustrate a French advance across the frozen country. To this end the Water-board of Rijnland drew up a long memorial to the States of Holland. Besides hacking at the ice, the sluices at the junction of the tidal rivers and the smaller streams must be kept open at high and low tide, so as to produce perpetual movement in the 'inland rivers.' Thus a stream of water would be kept flowing from the Lek along the Gouwe and the Wierikken canals into the Oude Rijn. The States commanded the Water-boards of Rijnland, Delfland, and Schieland to co-operate in the task. In the north the same work was entrusted to the Water-board of Amstel-land.[3]

Prince John Maurice was also active in devising 'what in 'time of frost should best be observed and taken in hand.'[4] He was of opinion that the intense cold alone would prevent the enemy from undertaking a big offensive. 'If he wishes 'to undertake anything considerable, he must drag with him 'provisions, ammunition, fascines, planks, and all that is 'necessary for crossing ditches, and the soldiers will have 'enough to do in this frightful cold to carry their weapons and

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 160.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 167–9.
[4] *Ibid.*, Bijlage, ix.

'keep their hands hidden.' He thought they would confine themselves to small plundering expeditions against the Dutch outposts. He advised that all the small artillery should be placed ready in the various outposts to be drawn over the ice by men instead of by horses, while the ammunition must be piled on sledges. Thus it could be quickly transported wherever it was required. He seems to have contemplated a sort of guerilla warfare, to be waged not only by the soldiers but by 'volunteer burghers, peasants, sailors, labourers and 'camp-followers,' who would be ready enough to take part, as a reward was offered to anyone bringing in a Frenchman, dead or alive. For this purpose, skates and crampons must be dealt out to the attacking parties. There is no official mention of 'skating companies' in the army until February 1673, when a troop of volunteers arrived from Haarlem. Maurice's hopes of turning the frost to account by conducting minor offensive operations were not realised until January and February. The honours of the winter campaign, as we shall see, remained with the French.

William, before leaving Holland, had given strict orders that Bodegraven must be held at all costs and only abandoned 'in the utmost necessity.' His instructions to Koningsmarck on this subject on November 1 were explicit. If the enemy succeeded in breaking through the waterline so as to threaten Bodegraven from behind, Koningsmarck might retire to Leiden to avoid being cut off and overwhelmed. But he utterly forbade him to leave it 'unless there is absolute 'necessity, and, as for throwing troops into Leiden, that must 'only be in the last extremity.'[1] The States of Holland thought Bodegraven of so much importance 'that to leave 'it would mean to risk handing over the greatest part of this 'province to the enemy.' Bodegraven did indeed open a door into the 'platte land'—the yet undrowned polder country

[1] Instruction of the Prince of Orange, November 1, Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 161.

of Rhineland, Delfland and Schieland, in the midst of which lay the glorious cities—Leiden, Haarlem, Gouda, Amsterdam, the Hague—abodes of peaceful and prosperous life, all unfit to be exposed to the fire of Luxembourg's artillery 'and set in danger of being devastated, burnt and ruined.' In spite of his instructions, however, Koningsmarck complained of being in doubt, and Fagel sent an express to William on December 13 asking for yet further orders as to what to do in case of need. William replied on the 18th from his camp before Charleroi: 'I have just received your letter of the 13th 'and will shortly say in answer that my intention about the 'abandonment of Bodegraven was that it must take place only 'in the utmost extremity, and you will please to let Count 'Koningsmarck know this in my name as soon as possible.'[1]

The real trouble was that Koningsmarck did not think Bodegraven defensible. There are indications that he was not without just cause for his fear. On December 21 the Field Deputies informed the States of Holland that the promised reinforcements from the other posts had been withdrawn or had not arrived. 'The Deputies have written 'repeatedly, but no notice has been taken of them.'[2] Next day Koningsmarck wrote that he had only fifty horses, while Luxembourg was massing his troops at Utrecht for an attack. He said he had already sent his sick, his cannon and ammunition into Leiden and had warned the town to be ready for the arrival of himself and his troops. 'I will hold out as long as 'I can,' he wrote, 'and when I no longer can I shall march to Leiden and defend that City to the utmost.' Koningsmarck, as appears from the Deputies' letter of December 23, had taken this step on his own authority without consulting them. The letters of the Deputies are full of complaints of how they are treated as ciphers by the officers. 'It is incredible with 'what scrupulous care our troops seek to protect themselves 'and how possessed they are with the feeling that the enemy is

[1] William to Fagel, December 18 in the Rijks Archief, the Hague. Quoted Van Sypestein and De Bordes.

[2] Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, December 21.

'going to take one or other post, and how little our reasonings 'weigh against that. . . .' 'We are very little regarded by 'the junior officers. . . . Everything is in confusion here 'and the new regiments so unruly that we waste nearly all our 'time in quieting them.'[1] An unhappy argument took place between Koningsmarck and the Deputies on the 24th, in which Koningsmarck asked what he must do if the French break through, 'whether fly or hazard a battle or stay still and 'let the enemy do their worst.' He said he had orders 'to 'retire into Leiden in case of extremity' and wanted to know what that limit meant. The Deputies replied they did not know and that it was his business to decide. The States of Holland, on hearing this report, sent orders that Koningsmarck must defend Bodegraven to the uttermost, or if he retired it must be only to the Gouwschesluis. It was on these orders rather than on those of the Prince of Orange that Koningsmarck finally acted. The fears in his mind, as he explained to the Deputies after his retreat on the 29th, were twofold; 'that the enemy, being lower down the Rijn, would try to 'cut him off, or would otherwise bring the city of Leiden into 'distress.'[2] His mistake, as we shall see, lay not so much in leaving Bodegraven as in retreating too far and without any well-thought-out idea of what he intended to do next.

Meanwhile Luxembourg was moving to the attack.[3] On December 27 he assembled 9,000 infantry and 1,400 cavalry at Woerden. It was the first day on which there had been any sign of a break in the frost, but nevertheless he determined to make the attempt on the waterline. He sent forward a company of cavalry to test the ice on the Wierikken canal. It would not bear, for the tidal flow through it from the Lek to the Rhine prevented more than a surface frost. Turning northwards he made his way to Zegveld, marching across the

[1] Particulieren Brieven aan Fagel, Rijks Archief, the Hague. Letters of the Deputies, December 23 and 24.

[2] Hop to the Burgomasters of Amsterdam, from Alphen, December 29, Van Sypestein en De Bordes, ii. p. 176 n. 1.

[3] See Map of Inundations.

frozen polders in the darkness of the early hours of December 28. His object was to reach the road along the Mijdrecht Canal and cut off Koningsmarck in the rear before he could retreat. Just beyond Zegveld he was stopped by an unfrozen canal, over which he had to make a bridge. Only 3,000 of his men had crossed when the bridge broke. With these he pressed on to the Mijdrecht, leaving the rest to follow as they might. After a brush with a patrol boat at Nieuwcoop he reached the road and proceeded unmolested to the village of Zwammerdam where the Mijdrecht joins the Oude Rijn. To his surprise he found but a handful of Dutch troops defending it, and these retreated westwards along the Leiden road when they saw the French approaching. In a short time Luxembourg had established himself on the Rijn Dyke, commanding the road and waterway between Alphen and Leiden in one direction, and Bodegraven and Utrecht in the other.

Koningsmarck had abandoned Bodegraven on the first tidings that the French were moving. To the last moment he showed an unsoldierly want of confidence in his own judgment, and wrote impatiently to the Deputies on the night of December 26: 'May it please you to command me how I am to behave with 'these troops, for there is no more delay possible here, either 'we must risk a battle or retreat in good time.'[1] The Deputies were determined not to take the responsibility for so great a step on their own shoulders and wrote to the States: 'How 'far the post at Bodegraven is to be defended we cannot deter-'mine, but the Count Koningsmarck must make use of such 'means as his generalship may dictate to him in these perplexing 'circumstances.'[2] In the evening of December 27 Koningsmarck wrote again that the enemy were marching across the ice to Zegveld: 'They will not attempt the Wierikken, 'but attack Bodegraven; they are 12,000 strong.'[3] Immediately after this he decided that Bodegraven must be abandoned.

[1] Particulieren Brieven aan Fagel, Rijks Archief, The Hague.
[2] *Ibid.* December 27. Also in Vivien en Hop, *Notulen*, December 27.
[3] Particulieren Brieven aan Fagel, Rijks Archief, The Hague.

If he really thought the post indefensible, he was within his instructions in leaving it in 'case of utmost necessity.' But his generalship was gravely at fault in his subsequent ordering of the retreat. He ought to have put his whole force into Zwammerdam, and held that obstinately; he would thus have been able to prevent the French from seizing the Rijn Dyke and so making themselves masters of the Leiden-Bodegraven road. Instead, he retreated with nearly all his troops to the gates of Leiden, but the city refused to receive him. The Deputies then insisted on his obeying the orders of the States and occupying Gouwsche-sluis. A small garrison was left in Nieuwerbrug, the most easterly of the posts on the Rijn. On arriving at Gouwsche-sluis on December 28, he sent a subordinate officer, Colonel Pain-et-Vin with a few troops back along the Rijn Dyke with orders to fetch some of the garrison left at Nieuwerbrug to Zwammerdam and hold it in case of attack. But before Pain-et-Vin could carry out these clumsy orders the French were masters of Zwammerdam and Pain-et-Vin found himself cut off from the main body of the Dutch troops, Luxembourg on one side of him and the denuded Bodegraven on the other. Panic seized him, and with the strange energy which some-times accompanies it, he proceeded to complete the disaster which Koningsmarck had begun. Instead of returning to Nieuwerbrug, to cheer the garrison and hold it against the French when the oncoming thaw should force them to retreat, he made the best of his way to Gouda with about 700 men. Almost immediately he left it again for Nieuwerbrug, with no other intention than of recalling to Gouda, on his own authority, the garrison which remained in Nieuwerbrug. In the night of the 28th this fatal journey was made along the Wierikken Dyke; a message was sent to the garrison, and in the morning of December 29 Nieuwerbrug was evacuated, the garrison marching back with Pain-et-Vin to Gouda.[1]

[1] 'Ceux de Bodegraven et des postes du Cleyn Wiericken se sont retirés 'ici (Gouda) environ sept cent hommes de plusieurs régiments. Le Colonel 'Pennevin [*sic*] est entré ici et incontinent reparti pour aller au Nieubruge

The way was thus left open for Luxembourg to retreat unmolested to Utrecht. A rapid thaw on the 28th obliged him to give up his pursuit of Koningsmarck, for, with the frenzied dyke-cutting that was in progress everywhere, it was impossible to conduct troops across country, while his retreat to Utrecht would in like manner have been cut off. Had a determined garrison remained in Bodegraven or Nieuwerbrug the French troops returning along the only available road—the Rijn Dyke —might have been put to rout and Luxembourg's expedition turned to disaster. As it was his men had nothing to do but lay waste the village of Bodegraven and put its inhabitants to the sword, after which, on learning that Nieuwerbrug was abandoned, they proceeded unmolested to Utrecht. It was the more humiliating for the Dutch, inasmuch as the Field Deputies had decided on the evening of the 29th to move forward to the attack and take Luxembourg in the rear.

By the disastrous conduct of Pain-et-Vin 'not only is our 'design frustrated but the enemy has obtained a safe road 'whereby to retreat and take his cannon with him.' The French themselves were exultant over their success, and not unmindful of the risk they had run. On January 6 Stoppa wrote to Louvois from Utrecht: 'I cannot refrain from 'telling you that this action of forcing the enemy in their own 'positions is most fortunate; if it had failed there would have 'been no safety for the retreat, and if the cavalry had been a 'day later in retiring, they would have been lost, for the waters 'are so high that there is no more road from here to Woerden 'except by water.' [1]

On December 30 the Prince of Orange reached Alphen. His visit to Bodegraven, which he found in ruins, convinced him that for the present Alphen must be his headquarters. Beyond that, little harm had been done by the French expedi-

'retirer les troupes qui y sont.' Letter from Thouars in Gouda to Fagel, December 28, Rijks Archief, The Hague. Pain-et-Vin was arrested next day, tried by court-martial and beheaded on January 23 at Alphen.

[1] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i. 290.

tion. The Dutch had had no casualties and Luxembourg had not achieved any of his objectives. But the Dutch knew that they had been saved not by their own military skill, but by the thaw.[1] Another severe frost might again expose the country to a French attack. This fear made William all the more anxious to rid the land of so terrible an incubus as the French army by pressing forward to the attack himself if another frost enabled him. He wrote to Fagel on February 7, 'I hope this soft weather will continue, as the enemy is making 'great preparations for an invasion into the heart of the 'country.' The frost, however, came on again in a day or two, and William assembled troops at Alphen with the intention of attacking Utrecht. Louvois, in warning Luxembourg of his design, called it 'une pure folie,' though, had the frost held, it would have been no more a folly than Luxembourg's similar attempt on Leiden. William intended to enter Utrecht while Luxembourg was himself marching 'towards 'Leiden or Amsterdam.'[2] But another thaw prevented even the beginnings of his attempt.

Holland had survived a most perilous winter, but the Stadtholder, as he prepared for his spring campaigns, cannot have regarded her situation with anything but the deepest anxiety. To begin with, his country was without an effective ally in the world; the long-expected help from Germany had proved a broken reed. The French army of occupation, in numbers and efficiency, was still greatly superior to the Dutch, though in condition and 'morale' the latter had certainly shown an improvement since the summer. Three factors could indeed be relied on which might prove of decisive value in the course of the next year. They were the fleet, the inundations and the now adamantine temper of the Government and people. The year 1673 was to prove the superiority

[1] Van der Goes, *Briefwisseling*, ii. p. 449: 'The thaw, whereby alone we 'have been saved and over which the French are raging, is one small proof that 'God has not abandoned us.'

[2] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i. p. 269.

of the Dutch fleet to that of the English and French, which was a main cause of the withdrawal of England from the war. It also showed that even Condé's genius was quite nonplussed by the device of inundations. Most important of all, no Dutch politician henceforth showed any desire to bargain or come to terms with the enemy while he yet occupied a yard of Dutch soil.

CHAPTER XV

The Turn of the Tide, 1673

The session of Parliament which met at Westminster in February 1673, after two years' recess, has been described by Dalrymple as that to which 'every Briton who now lives 'doth perhaps owe the whole liberty he enjoys.'[1] The statement is too wide, but a spirit was forming itself in the old Cavalier Parliament (now in the thirteenth year of its existence) which was to develop, under the brilliant leadership of the renegade Shaftesbury, into an opposition terrible to the Court. Old Cromwellians like Marvell, old Royalists who had suffered many things for Charles I, like 'iron Strang- 'ways,' met now with a joint determination to get rid of two things—the Declaration of Indulgence and the Standing Army. The latter lay formidably encamped at Blackheath on the outskirts of London.[2] It had been raised during the past two years without the consent of Parliament and was officered in the main by Irish Catholics and commanded by Louis Duras, Viscount Feversham, a naturalised Frenchman and nephew of Turenne.

Charles met the Houses with a haughty speech, declaring his determination to maintain his dispensing power, and demanding an immediate and generous supply to raise yet more troops for 'the necessary and expensive war' into which he had entered. Shaftesbury, who had been made Lord Chancellor in November, followed the King with a long and

[1] Dalrymple, *Memoirs*, i. p. 34.

[2] 'The dark Hovering of that army so long at Black Heath might not im- 'probably seem the gatherings of a storm to fall upon London.' (Marvell, *Growth of Popery*.)

fiery appeal to the Commons to supply the King's necessities. His attack on the Dutch was couched in virulent language; for no other reason than that they were our rivals in trade, 'Carthage must be destroyed.' It should be noticed that he made no mention of the Prince of Orange. Though the King's nephew was now at the head of the Dutch State, though he had made strenuous efforts and generous offers to restore peace, the English Court were still foolish enough to treat him as a cypher. The old pretence that they were fighting for his restoration was proved a hollow sham. But Shaftesbury's peroration, considering the state of public feeling, must have caused even the stoutest Royalist to smile. 'Let us bless God and the King that our Religion is safe; that 'the Church of England is the care of our Prince; that Parlia-'ments are safe, that our properties and liberties are safe. 'What more hath a good Englishman to ask than that this 'Triple Alliance of King, Parliament and people may never be 'dissolved?' The story of the session is well known. The Commons would not open the purse-strings until they were satisfied about the Declaration of Indulgence. They told Charles that he had no right to dispense with statutes 'in 'matters ecclesiastical.'

Charles was at first in favour of maintaining the Declaration and dissolving Parliament. All his ministers, with the sole exception of Arlington, urged him to this course. But, as always at a crisis, Arlington, assisted by the French Ambassador, prevailed. Louis refused any further subsidies, but promised to assist Charles with as many troops as he pleased in carrying out the 'great design,' as soon as his affairs on the Continent were favourably settled.[1] In the meantime, the nation must be humoured. Arlington was already convinced that if the war and the Roman Catholic ambitions of the Court continued, there would be a revolution. Since his return to England he had preached a speedy peace at Cabinet

[1] Despatch of Colbert to Louis, March 20, 1673: Dalrymple's *Memoirs*, ii. p. 94.

meetings. Now he urged the withdrawal of the Declaration.[1] The truth is that Arlington was thoroughly frightened at the unpopularity of the Court and the ill-success of the war. His own name was too deeply incriminated for him to escape if certain revelations were made. So, trusting still, and not in vain, to his influence with Charles, he began to tack. Unlike Shaftesbury, he desired, not the glitter of popularity and parliamentary success, but safety and the shrewd management of the King's ambitions, whose strength and weakness he understood to a nicety. When, in obedience alike to the representations of Arlington and Colbert, Charles determined to cancel the Declaration, Shaftesbury, sniffing further trouble ahead, began to court the favour of the Commons, and spoke in support of the Test Act for excluding all Roman Catholics from public office. Arlington looked on unperturbed at the break-up of the Ministry during the summer. In consequence of the Test Act, which Parliament insisted on passing before it would proceed to the supply, Clifford and the Duke of York, both acknowledged Papists, resigned their offices. In the autumn a new set of men, powerful in Parliament, Royalist, but untainted either by friendship to France or papistical leanings, began to take office. Sir Thomas Osborne, Lord Danby, became Treasurer; Seymour, of Somersetshire fame, Speaker; Heneage Finch, of High Church royalism, Lord Keeper. Parliament had, before Charles prorogued it on March 29, voted a supply, cunningly spread out over eighteen months, thus relieving themselves of the duty of voting another in the autumn session. They had every reason to be pleased with themselves. They had vindicated religion and begun the purge of the Cabinet. The Test Act was a great safeguard against future 'evil counsellors.' In the autumn they would fall upon the war, whose uselessness was now growing daily more apparent, and upon the Standing Army, about which they had already petitioned the King.

[1] Barbour, *Earl of Arlington*, pp. 200–209. P.R.O. Foreign Entry Book 177, for minutes of Cabinet Meetings.

The new year in Holland opened, after the critical days of December 1672, with no remarkable action of either army. It would be impossible and tedious to describe in any detail the events—military, naval and diplomatic—of this year. Save that the Dutch now began to gain the upper hand, they differed little in character from that of the year before. The abortive peace congress which met at Cologne in June under the auspices of Sweden, had no results save to demonstrate the firmness and even haughtiness of the Dutch, and the unabated greed and extravagance of Louis. Our chief concern is to show the influence of the Prince of Orange on every event of any importance, and the change which that influence wrought in the temper of Dutch politics. Nothing could now be undertaken save by his leave and with his approval. Thus, when it was a question of selecting Deputies to attend the conference at Cologne, he nominated Van Beverningk and Van Renswoude to represent the province of Holland, though Van Renswoude was not a Hollander but came from the province of Utrecht. He said that there was no suitable member, besides Van Beverningk, who could be sent from Holland, and the States, in spite of the protests of Amsterdam, who naturally thought herself slighted, did not care to cross him.[1] The ambassadors were afforded an honourable passage to Cologne by the French, but how much Louvois grudged it is shown in his insolent remark to his agent at Utrecht: 'Notwithstanding the scorn one must have for the people of that country, they must be treated as Ambassadors.'

The Swedes were very anxious to arrange a general armistice in the spring of 1673. Louvois was sceptical of the advantage of such a period of inaction. 'If the Dutch were men,' he wrote, 'they would have made peace long ago; but since they are but beasts . . . we had better prepare ourselves for war than relax at the first appearance of peace.'

William, on his part, set himself against the proposed armistice with all the energy of which he was master. He

[1] Vivien en Hop, March 24 and 28, 1673; Wagenaar, xiv. p. 245.

told the States of Holland that an armistice would be all to the advantage of France, who would remain in possession of Dutch towns and territories, which she would proceed further to fortify and fill with troops. The Dutch, on the other hand, would, he felt sure, grow slack and inefficient during a long armistice. He did not trust the spirit of the nation always to be vigilant and well-prepared. 'I cannot,' he said, 'advise 'an armistice unless I am assured that in the meantime the 'common cause will be well supported.' He complained that already the hope of peace was making people half-hearted. A short armistice until June 1, to be employed in a vigorous repair of defences and improvement of the army, he would approve, but nothing indefinite or unlimited.[1] Neither France nor England would listen to such an offer, and hostilities therefore continued throughout the summer. In April several members of the States of Holland were in favour of requesting the Prince to take into his sole charge the affairs of the Cologne Conference, assisted by a small advisory committee. Actually, this was not carried out in the letter, but William's influence on the negotiations was decisive throughout.

If Louis hoped to obtain by negotiation what he had not yet succeeded in winning by war, he was very much mistaken. He and the English plenipotentiaries at Cologne (Sir Lionel Jenkins and Sir Joseph Williamson) made practically no alteration in their demands from the previous summer.[2] Such folly is almost inconceivable, for if the Dutch had refused them last July, when all was apparently desperate, they were far more inclined to do so now, with a united Government and a brightening military outlook. The English even held to their old demand for the hereditary Stadtholderate for the Prince. They were informed 'that the

[1] Vivien en Hop, March 29, 1673.

[2] Wagenaar, xiv. 253–60. Louis demanded Maastricht, Grave, Crèvecœur, 's Hertogenbosch and Breda (with their surrounding districts) all the forts on the Waal, including Nijmegen and Bommel, and the stretch of country between Nijmegen and Grave.

'States and the Prince of Orange lived in the most perfect 'unity, so that there was nothing to consider in regard to His 'Highness.' Van Beverningk, at the end of July, demanded the evacuation of all Dutch territory by the French, and the restoration of the Cleves towns to Brandenburg. He refused to cede any of the Generality or towns on the frontier of the Spanish Netherlands. Louis refused to make any material concessions, and on September 22 the States, on the advice of the Prince of Orange, finally rejected the French and English terms.[1]

Much contributed, during the summer, to strengthen and justify the firmness of the Dutch attitude at Cologne. The war on land was not so desperate as it had been, for the continued inundations proved most baffling to the French. At the beginning of May, Condé returned from the Rhine and took the supreme command at Utrecht with Luxembourg under him.[2] It was an arrangement satisfactory to neither, for Condé found no activities suitable to his genius, and Luxembourg was mortified by being subordinated to him. In the course of his survey of the territory and cities in French hands, Condé could not but be struck by the surly and almost desperate temper of the people, crushed by a year of French military tyranny and merciless taxation. Condé was a great enough prince to be able to speak his mind fearlessly to Louvois on the subject.

'Meantime, I cannot refrain from telling you that I find 'the spirit of these folk quite different from last year: they are 'all in despair on account of the insupportable taxes which are 'daily required of them. It seems to be that the profit we 'draw from them (beyond what we should obtain by gentler 'means) is very small, and is not worth the cruel aversion we 'have brought upon ourselves. I am not sure it is to the 'King's interest to continue these methods.'[3]

[1] Mignet, iv. p. 160.
[2] Rousset, *Vie de Louvois*, vol. i.
[3] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i. p. 347.

The French had, indeed, been at no pains to make their conquest pleasant to the people. Stoppa, the governor of Utrecht, was an upright and merciful man, who refused to extract a penny from the inhabitants for his own purposes, but the man whom Louvois placed in charge of the financial side of affairs in Utrecht—'l'intendant 'Robert'—was a master of every art of deliberate and unashamed extortion. To Louvois he wrote long accounts of the vast 'amendes' to which he condemned the citizens if they concealed from his greedy eyes even 'bad chairs, large 'wooden cupboards and a few bad gilt leather tapestries.' All the richer citizens had either fled or sent their valuables out of the city, so that there was little left of any value in the stately homes of the richest burghers, but Robert took a vindictive pleasure in persecuting those who remained, inventing false charges as an excuse for fining them, and extorting the fines by that device which in later years Louis used to make the lives of his own Huguenot subjects a burden to them—the free quartering of soldiers in private houses. Louvois had found in Robert a man after his own heart. 'I am sure,' wrote Robert once to his chief, 'that you would never permit all the 'cruelties I commit, to draw from them the little money I do 'draw, if you were present.' Louvois replied: 'I have received 'the account of the contributions. The total sum has exceeded 'my hopes. I beg you not to cease to be unkind to them, and 'to push matters in this respect with all the vigour imaginable.' Louvois' sole idea in conquering was to bleed white the conquered, so as to swell his master's treasuries. The wiser and more merciful even of the French Court could see no profit in such greedy extortion, which must, sooner or later, leave the new acquisitions too exhausted to pay anything at all. But their representations fell on deaf ears.[1]

The campaign of 1673 proved beyond doubt that the inundations, resorted to in the previous summer as a measure of

[1] Rousset, *Vie de Louvois*, i. pp. 435–44.

despair, had proved not merely a check, but an insuperable obstacle to any further progress of the enemy into Holland. Wherever Condé sought an opening for attack, he was met by impenetrable floods, across which it was impossible to march troops. Luxembourg made a reconnoitring expedition in the middle of May towards Hinderdam, and found that even on the dyke he was in water up to the saddle girths.[1] 'Ever since I 'came here,' wrote Condé on May 19, 'I have done nothing 'else but try and find a route for attack. M. de Luxembourg 'also employs all his astuteness without being able to find one, 'the waters being everywhere prodigiously high. They are 'beginning to go down, but the posts are not yet accessible.'[2]

On June 6 he wrote:

'The two sides of the Vecht are like a sea; the whole country from Amsterdam to Wilnis, and again from Wilnis to Woerden is inundated in the same way, so that all the dykes are covered with water at the shallowest up to the knee. I have caused all the dykes to be sounded by officers sent for the purpose. The only dyke uncovered is the big one from Woerden to Leiden (along the old Rhine) and on that the enemy have rebuilt the fort of Nieuwerbrug. Even that is cut in several places, and the fort is inundated all round; there is nowhere any approach save by the big dyke. From there the country is inundated to Oudewater, and from Oudewater to Schoonhoven and beyond the Lek also.'

The Lek dykes east of Schoonhoven and Langerak were still dry, as was also that between Montfoort and Oudewater, but beyond them every road was under water, 'so that 'we cannot place ourselves beyond Oudewater or Schoonhoven 'and prevent the reinforcements which the enemy can send 'thither by boats; their boats can not only proceed by their 'canals, but even across their inundations.'[3] Every outpost, he said, was supported by 'large frigates armed with cannon

[1] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i. p. 363. [2] *Ibid.* p. 371.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 376.

'at the junction of big canals or rivers, and where there is only 'a small post there are many small boats on which they have 'placed light artillery.'[1] The Dutch, meanwhile, besides refortifying Nieuwerbrug, established a new and important outpost at Nieuwersluis, at the junction of the Vecht and Kromme Angstel, in the middle of May. Amsterdam was charged with the erection of a fort there and the provision of ammunition and supplies.[2] A valuable elbow of the Vecht was thus captured by the Dutch, and the approach of the French towards Muiden from Utrecht made more impossible than ever. Very little was undertaken by either side during the early summer. The French attempted to establish themselves at Muiderberg, a small hill breaking the flat coastline half-way between Naarden and Muiden.[3] The Dutch batteries and boats round Muiden effectively prevented any farther advance, and after a few weeks Muiderberg was abandoned.

In April William sent John Maurice to take command in Friesland. He hoped thereby to effect some sort of diversion in favour of the Elector of Brandenburg, whose army was rapidly falling back before the pressure of Turenne. William told John Maurice to correspond with the Elector and tell him 'that you have orders to concert with him what you 'can undertake, hoping that on his side he will take action 'likewise.'[4] The hope, as we have seen, was a vain one. Shortage of troops, though not so acute as in the previous year, was still an anxiety to William. He was constantly having to borrow from John Maurice, who was by no means always ready to lend. 'In waging a defensive war,' remarked

[1] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i. p. 379.

[2] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. pp. 183–7; *Recueil de Lettres*, i. pp. 363–5.

[3] 'Les ennemis de notre côté icy s'approchent autant qu'ils peuvent de 'tous nos postes : il se sont mis sur le Muyderberg, et ont fait des traverses sur 'la digue, à un coup de canon prés de Muiden.' (William to John Maurice, June 4, Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives*, 2nd Series. v. p. 321.)

[4] William to John Maurice, May 1. *Ibid.* p. 313.

William, 'as we are doing, and having so few troops, these 'eternal counter-marches are unavoidable.' [1]

While the great Condé was chafing in vain against enforced inactivity on the Dutch front, and Turenne awaiting the approach of Imperial troops to the Rhine, Louis was preparing for a spectacular 'coup' of which he should himself be the hero. The siege of Maastricht—neglected last year for the greater enterprise of marching straight into the heart of the Dutch Republic—was now to be undertaken, more for the sake of the 'éclat' which a great and successful siege would cause than for any overwhelming strategic advantage which was to be gained by it. In his pride he determined to provoke and alarm the Spaniards by dragging his great army through the Spanish Netherlands. This, more than anything else, pushed Spain, a few weeks later, into open war. At the head of an army of 70,000 men, accompanied by Vauban, the infallible prince of siege-craft, and for part of the way by his Queen and Court, Louis set out on a meandering journey through Flanders. Monterey, the Governor of the Spanish Netherlands, was puzzled by his movements, for he appeared to threaten Ghent, and on June 2 camped under the very walls of Brussels. Monterey hastily recalled his scattered troops from Gelderland to protect the capital, thereby falling into the trap laid for him, for Louis sent on his advanced guard to the Meuse, eluding the Spanish troops, and on June 6 the trenches were opened around Maastricht.[2] William was most anxious to march to its relief,[3] but before he could collect enough troops, the city had surrendered and the garrison marched out with the honours of war (July 1). The siege had in every way fulfilled Louis's expectations. It was not particularly remarkable, save that it was the scene of one of the earliest exploits of a young English officer in

[1] William to John Maurice, May 1, Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives*, 2nd Series, v. p. 322.

[2] Rousset, i. pp. 452–8.

[3] Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives*, 2nd Series, v. p. 322. William to John Maurice, June 14.

the French service whose name was afterwards to be a terror to the very king under whom he then served. John Churchill had been, since 1672, a captain in a foot regiment with the contingent of 6,000 English troops serving under the Duke of Monmouth with the French army. Under the leadership of Monmouth, Churchill took part, with twelve lifeguardsmen and half a dozen English volunteers, in a gallant charge to recapture a half-moon taken the day before by a sortie of the Dutch. The charge was successful, and Churchill's daring gained him the notice which he desired from Louis and Charles.

The advantage gained by Louis in thus obtaining complete control of the Meuse valley was not followed up by any attempt on the southern frontiers, or on 's Hertogenbosch or Breda. Louis returned, after his easy victory, to Versailles: William, during July and August, took up his headquarters at Raamsdonk, to the south of Geertruidenberg, in case Condé should make an attack on Breda, and Condé lay for a time at Grave, until some unlucky orders from Louvois caused him to move across to Flanders to watch the movements of the Spaniards.[1] The departure of Condé from the Meuse was what William was waiting for. Luxembourg, on whom fell the consequences of Louvois's stupidity, bitterly blamed him for what he had done. 'I wish,' he wrote on September 12, when William was hammering at the gates of Naarden, 'that you had not had good reasons for removing M. le Prince 'de Condé from Brabant; he obliged the Prince of Orange to 'keep troops there and do nothing as a result. Did you not 'know the strength of the Dutch, and did it not occur to you 'that they would undertake something? And they would not 'have dared to think of it if M. le Prince had not left his 'position.'[2]

As soon as Condé left Grave, William took action. He made first a feint of attacking Bommel or Grave, thus drawing Luxembourg himself and some of his troops away from Utrecht towards Tiel. Then, breaking up his camp in Brabant, he

[1] Rousset, *Vie de Louvois*, i. pp. 468–9. [2] Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i. p. 312.

quickly marched with a body of some 25,000 men back to the neighbourhood of Muiden, and by September 3 had established himself at Loosdrecht, on the edge of the high ground to the south of Naarden.[1] By his orders the road from Amsterdam to Weesp and on to 's Gravelandt was made fit to give passage to his troops. On September 8, the trenches in front of Naarden were opened, on the night of the 11th the defences were stormed, and on September 13 the French commander, seeing no help approaching, surrendered the town and marched out of Naarden with the garrison of nearly 3,000 men, to join Luxembourg at Utrecht. Luxembourg had made no attempt to relieve the town, because after Condé's departure he had not enough troops under his immediate command to hazard a battle.[2] '*Domine*,' he wrote to Louvois, '*quare me dereli-quisti?*' The Dutch were reinforced by 3,000 Spanish cavalry as well as some infantry, and it was this superiority which made the French timid.[3] He did not scruple to tell Louvois that if the Prince captured Naarden, he was strong enough to attempt something further, for the country between Arnhem and Naarden, being high heathy ground, would be easily mastered by those who were superior in cavalry. Luxembourg was deeply mortified by this, his first real reverse. He saw himself reduced thereby to adopting the defensive, instead of, as heretofore, pressing the Dutch with threats of attack. 'What is there left to do,' he wrote, 'seeing that we are the weaker?'

This success, the first the Dutch had yet gained on land, had been preceded, and to some extent made possible, by

[1] Letter to John Maurice, dated 'Oudt Loosdreght, ce 3 septembre 1673,' Groen van Prinsteur, *Archives*, 2nd Series, v. p. 336.

[2] 'Quand même on aura assemblé tout l'infanterie que l'on pourra tirer des 'places, le tout ensemble ne monte qu'à vingt bataillons, à n'en laisser que six 'à Utrecht, et mon escadron de cavalerie. Vous savez la cavalerie que nous 'avons dans ce pays-ci, dont une grande partie est en mauvais état.' Stoppa to Louvois, September 7; Griffet, *Recueil de Lettres*, i. p. 308.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 311. William had 6,000 Spanish troops under his command in all. Van Sypestein en De Bordes, ii. p. 196.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 316.

an encouraging summer campaign at sea. By the end of April the section of the Dutch fleet provided by the province of Holland was already at sea, numbering thirty-one warships and a large number of smaller vessels. Even when the Zeeland and Friesland divisions had joined forces, the whole fleet numbered only one hundred and five vessels, of which fifty-two were warships, and was thus considerably inferior in strength to the combined English and French fleets.[1] Owing to the pressing demand for soldiers and volunteers for the land war, and to the fact that the fishing season had begun, it had proved far more difficult than usual to man the fleet.[2] But the spirit of men and officers on board 'the little handful' ('klein hoopken') as the sailors jokingly called it, was of the best. William, though by temperament a soldier, avoided the fatal mistake, into which Louis had already fallen, of neglecting the navy for the sake of a great and efficient land army. As Admiral-General of the Union he acquitted himself with tactful impartiality, never interfering in purely naval affairs, yet sustaining that close personal touch with the fleet and its commanders which had been the distinguishing feature of Dutch politics in the days of De Witt. Though in all things the opposite of a demagogue, William knew exactly when and how to appeal to the hearts of his countrymen. His letter to the Dutch seamen, read aloud by De Ruyter to the assembled officers of the Dutch navy on board his flagship on May 25, rang like a trumpet call to battle and to judgment. 'The eyes 'and hearts of all our countrymen,' he wrote, 'yea, of all the 'Christian world, are fixed on the prowess of the fleet, and to 'him who should bear himself cowardly, or other than a good 'soldier and seaman should in face of the enemy, nowhere 'would be more dangerous than the harbours of the State.'[3] Nor were the words mere bravado; he knew, and every

[1] The combined fleets amounted to about 150 sail—Cal. S.P. Domestic, 1673, p. 226.

[2] 'The squadron of Zeeland is very backward yet, for they want seamen extremely—insomuch that the drums do daily beat at Amsterdam to take up seamen for the Zeeland squadron.' (Colenbrander, *Zeeoorlogen*, ii. 217.)

[3] De Jonge, *Nederlandsche Zeewezen III*, i. 216.

Dutchman knew, that if the fleet were defeated, the English would land troops on the coast.

But it was in the disposal of the supreme naval command that William showed tact and wisdom beyond his years. With De Ruyter, the darling of the people, the old friend of the De Witts, the one man in Holland who had dared openly to mourn their loss, William lived on terms of perfect cordiality. Before the opening of the campaign he had brought about a reconciliation between De Ruyter and Cornelis Tromp, son of Marten Harpetszoon Tromp, Blake's old enemy. Since 1666 Tromp had lived in retirement, having quarrelled with De Ruyter after the Battle of the Four Days and been dismissed by the Government from his command, partly, it must be owned, on account of his undisguised Orangism. But the fleet had no party politics, and the dismissal of Tromp had been most unpopular. William was now determined to restore him to his old post of Admiral of the Amsterdam squadron, vacant by the death of Van Gent. He insisted, however, that Tromp must first be reconciled with De Ruyter and promise to serve obediently under him. This he made an absolute condition of his reinstatement. After some hesitation on the part of Tromp, the two admirals met in the Prince's presence and promised loyally to abide by one another. The Prince, in order to prove the superior command of De Ruyter, conferred upon him in February 1673 the title of 'Lieutenant-'Admiral-General of Holland and Westfriesland'—a title never hitherto granted to any admiral. Its resemblance to that of William himself made it particularly remarkable. At the same time William seems to have promised Tromp, secretly and by word of mouth only, the succession to this post and title, should he outlive De Ruyter. There is no doubt that in this delicate business William acted from no party spirit, but out of the shrewdest knowledge, both of the characters of the men concerned and of the needs and demands of the fleet. To leave a sailor of the quality of Tromp in disgrace in such a crisis and for such trivial causes would have been not only

ungenerous but impolitic, for there was no other man in Holland whose ability and courage had been so well proved.[1]

With harmony in its high places, therefore, and good spirits among its sailors, the Dutch fleet began the campaign. It was in every way advantageous, if not glorious, for them. All through the summer De Ruyter kept his fleet in being, preventing all approach to the shores of Holland and Zeeland. On the two occasions on which the fleets were engaged in battle—at Schooneveld in June and again off Texel on August 21—the allies were unable to do the Dutch any material damage. At the Texel the behaviour of the French Admiral d'Estrées, who refused again and again to obey Prince Rupert's signals, spoilt every chance of gaining an advantage, and raised such a storm of indignation in England that the one demand from every quarter was that Parliament, when it met, should put an end to the French alliance.[2] The army on Blackheath, which had been shipped in June from Gravesend to Yarmouth to be ready for an invasion of Holland as soon as the Dutch fleet was defeated, went into winter quarters in September. The discipline and equipment of both fleet and army were alike a disgrace to the British Government and Civil Service. The ships of the fleet were lamentably undermanned, and the vessels left harbour without so much as a needle to mend their sails.[3] As for the army, drinking was so rampant that disobedience and mutiny were frequent. The officers were little better, and Count Schomberg, who had come over from France in July to take command, found the task of drilling and controlling them almost too much for him.[4] The weakness and rottenness of Restoration methods

[1] De Jonge, *Nederlandsche Zeewezen III*, i. pp. 218–29. William also showed great tact in refraining from altering the colours of the flag. Since 1653 the orange stripe in the Dutch Tricolor had been replaced by a red one (the colour of the Lion of Holland) and the use of the orange, white and blue forbidden. Under the new flag great deeds of arms had been achieved against Cromwell and Charles II, and William wisely thought it best not to raise controversy over so delicate a point (De Jonge, I. pp. 246–7).

[2] Cal. S.P. Domestic, 1673, p. 509, Rupert to Arlington, August 23.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 333, Rupert to Arlington, June 3.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 755, Schomberg to Arlington, July 23.

of government had penetrated to the shipyards and the camp, so that the King and the statesmen who signed away England's independence at Dover could not even keep the respect of their subjects or hold their enemies in awe by a reasonable efficiency in naval and military affairs.

The time of the Republic's deliverance had now come. The autumn campaign of 1673 resembled in general outline that of the previous year, but this time the enterprises of William and his allies just succeeded where before they had just failed. The most important change in the system of alliances was the entry of Spain into the war in August. Louis had been deeply offended by the help which Monterey, the Governor of the Spanish Netherlands, had given to William in the previous winter at Charleroi and Binch. The Queen Regent of Spain, in March 1673, had refused to disavow his action at the request of France. Louis, as we have seen, had not scrupled to march his troops through the heart of the Spanish Netherlands when on his way to besiege Maastricht in June. The Dutch earnestly desired Spain as an ally for many reasons. It was, from their point of view, highly desirable that Louis should remove the seat of war from the Republic to the Spanish Netherlands. Further, the States hoped to use Spain as the lever for obtaining peace with England. For commercial reasons, they knew England would be sorely inconvenienced by a war with Spain, and therefore a threat of war with England, if she continued in her present courses, was included in the treaty between Spain and the Republic. And the Dutch, on their part, promised not only to restore Maastricht to Spain at the general peace, but to secure that all towns and territories conquered by France from Spain since the Peace of the Pyrenees in 1659 should be restored to her. Louis would thus have to renounce all the conquests made during the war of 1667 and guaranteed by the Peace of Aix in 1668. It spoke much for the restored vigour of the Dutch and the hopefulness of their chief that they consented

to make such a treaty. William, during the war which was now opening, was fighting desperately for this ambitious aim; indeed, his heart was more set upon it than the hearts of the Spaniards themselves. There can be no doubt that he inspired the framing of the Treaty on that point. It was the measure of what he felt about France; no less than that, he thought with terrible conviction, must be achieved if Europe is to be safe from her ambitions. In conversation after conversation with Sir William Temple during the next four years, he reiterated his thoughts on this theme, and his opposition to any peace which fell short of these terms was uncompromising, in spite of the failing spirits of the Dutch and the ill-success of his campaigns. 'When the Spaniards go beyond the 'Peace of the Pyrenees,' he said, 'I shall be as much a French-'man as I am now a Spaniard, but not before.' [1]

The Empire also had again been goaded by Louis's continued provocations into new alliances with France's enemies. The presence of Turenne in Germany in the spring was deeply resented, as much as the continual threat to Holland and the Netherlands was feared. At Cologne in July the Emperor put forward as the Imperial demands that Germany be evacuated, the Cleves and Westphalian towns restored to Brandenburg, the Duchy of Lorraine restored to its duke, Spain and the Netherlands left inviolate, and Holland at least spared from total ruin. Such demands, said Louis, were totally unacceptable and should not have been offered 'qu'après plusieurs battailles gagnées.' Meanwhile, Louis was collecting an army to advance on the Rhine. 'I have one 'bridge at Andernach and another at Philipsbourg,' he told Gremonville, 'ready to carry me where necessity shall call 'me . . . in order to restore peace and tranquillity to Germany.' Insolence of this kind did not placate the Emperor's indignation, and he began collecting an army in Bohemia. On August 28 he sent a long manifesto to the Diet of Ratisbon, enumerating the delinquencies of the French. They had

[1] Temple, *Memoirs*, 1672–9.

occupied Imperial territory and towns since April 1672 without the Emperor's consent, and by forcing Münster and Cologne to go to war with Holland had broken the treaties of Westphalia. Even now Rochefort was marching on the Imperial and neutral city of Trèves. He besieged and took it in the first week of September. The valley of the Moselle also was now in the hands of the French.[1] On August 30 matters came to a head at the Hague, and the Republic signed treaties simultaneously with the Empire, with Spain and with the Duke of Lorraine. The Emperor promised to advance to the Rhine, the States-General paying him 45,000 rixdalers a month. Spain promised to mediate with England on behalf of the States-General, offering, as the limit of Dutch concessions, the salute of the flag and 800,000 crowns. The politics of Louis were beginning to recoil upon him. It was France who now stood isolated in Europe, surrounded by angry and injured enemies, while Holland had become the pivot of a great alliance. In vain Louis proposed at Cologne more moderate terms: Spain should take possession of the Generality, while France should take, in exchange, Luxembourg, Franche Comté, or the towns of Spanish Flanders. The nations were in no mood for such bargaining. The defeat of Brandenburg, the capture of Maastricht, far from bringing Louis nearer his goal, had committed him, in Louvois' words, to 'une bonne, longue guerre' on many fronts. Courtin, Louis's Ambassador at Cologne, saw in the prospect 'la ruine de ses sujets.' Louvois, however, was prepared to fight for years rather than make what he considered a dishonourable peace. 'The King would sooner 'yield Paris and Versailles than Maastricht,' he wrote.

William's plan for the autumn campaign was much the same as that of the previous year. He would march with the united Dutch and Spanish armies across the Meuse to the Rhine; there unite, if possible, with Montecucculli and the Imperialists, and capture some town in the territory of the

[1] Rousset, *Vie de Louvois*, i. pp. 471–2.

new Archbishop of Cologne.[1] Thereby he hoped to 'draw 'the war into that country and deliver our own, and force the 'Imperialists to cross the Rhine, which they would not do 'otherwise.'[2] He crossed the Meuse at Venloo on October 23, and on November 3 effected his junction with Montecucculli close to Bonn. The Imperialist general had outwitted Turenne's vigilance this time, and, instead of waiting till he could find a place to cross the Rhine, had embarked his infantry at Mainz and brought them down as far as Coblentz by water. He then marched through Trèves and joined William between Bonn and Andernach. Turenne had crossed the Rhine at Philipsbourg, but was unable to catch up the enemy. 'I find it absolutely impossible,' he wrote, 'on 'account of the provisions, roads and the time of year, to cross 'into the plain of Cologne.' Bonn was badly defended, for the Archbishop refused until the last moment to admit even a small French garrison, and on November 12 it surrendered. For a moment it seemed as though the allied army would proceed unmolested to Cologne, where the conference was still making a pretence of sitting, but Luxembourg hastily threw some troops into Neuss, which effectually prevented any more campaigning on the Rhine. William left the Rhine and betook himself to the Meuse: Montecucculli returned to Vienna.[3]

Almost simultaneously with the fall of Bonn, Luxembourg began the abandonment of Utrecht and the Dutch conquests so gloriously acquired in 1672. Louvois had warned him in October that he would soon receive orders to retreat. The war was fast becoming European; Holland, instead of being the centre, was now but an outpost of the operations. With the entry of Spain into the war, Louis's old passion for the

[1] 'Comme la perte de Bonn ou d'Andernach seroit une affaire capitale, Sa 'Majesté a cru qu'elle n'avoit point d'affaire plus importante que celle-la.' (Louvois to Condé, October 18: Rousset, i. 190.)

[2] William to Waldeck, October 24, from Kaldekirchen. *Journaal van C. Huygens*, p. 11. Waldeck was left in command of the Holland front.

[3] Rousset, *Vie de Louvois*, i. pp. 498–501.

Spanish Netherlands had returned. The conquest of Holland, so easily begun, had proved so hard of accomplishment that Louis grew tired of persisting in it. Spectacular campaigning was what appealed to him : the war around Utrecht had ceased to be spectacular, and had, therefore, ceased to interest him. In spite, therefore, of the regrets of Condé, who saw in retreat an acknowledgement of failure, the abandonment of almost all the Dutch conquests was determined on early in November. Utrecht, as Condé pointed out, was the key position, without which the rest would be difficult and wasteful to maintain. 'You would hardly need less infantry to keep what will 'remain than to hold Utrecht.' Besides, the treatment the French had meted out to their new subjects, in fines, confiscations and taxation, had so impoverished town and country that it was becoming difficult to obtain sufficient food for man and beast. Luxembourg was therefore ordered to abandon Utrecht, the towns on the Zuyder Zee, Ijssel and Lek, and to bring their garrisons together at Maastricht, before marching into France. About 20,000 men would be left in the towns of the Waal, Meuse and Rhine. Luxembourg accomplished the retreat successfully, eluding the army of William and Monterey, which tried for a time to intercept him between Maastricht and Charleroi.[1]

When Stoppa, the Governor of Utrecht, handed back the keys to the citizens on November 23, he spoke as though he were relieved of a task which had become distasteful. 'It 'is now nearly a year and a half,' he said to them, 'since I 'took the keys from you at the command of the King of 'France. I now give back, by command of the same King, 'the keys once more to your charge. Go to your church and 'thank God for your deliverance, and pray him that we never 'return.'[2] One last gigantic fine was exacted from the exhausted city, and then the French marched out. When Count Hoorn and the Dutch troops entered, Orange flags

[1] Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 201.
[2] Wagenaar, xiv. p. 281 ; Van Sypestein en De Bordes, part ii. p. 201, n. 1.

were flying in the streets, and the Domkerk had returned to the rule of the pulpit and the Bible after its brief acquaintance with the Mass. The Cleves cities on the Rhine, the Betuwe, Arnhem, Nijmegen and Zutfen, Schenkenschans and Deventer remained for a few more months in French hands. Their evacuation was due to further alliances and advantages gained by the Dutch during the winter and early spring.

The Peace Conference at Cologne dragged uselessly on until March 1674. By the end of 1673 it was clear that neither France nor the States were willing to accommodate each other, and the States' ambassadors employed their time more profitably in making peace with the Bishops of Münster and Cologne. The movements in Germany and the withdrawal of French troops from many positions in the States' territories were obviously unfavourable to further effort on the part of the Bishops. The troops which they had in Friesland had met with no successes, and the capture of Bonn was a serious blow to the Elector of Cologne. By May 1674 both Bishops had made peace with the Republic, promising to restore all places and territories taken since the outbreak of war. Relieved of these troublesome neighbours, the allied powers sought to extend the coalition in Germany. In the summer of 1674 the Dukes of Brunswick-Luneberg, the Bishop of Osnabrück, the King of Denmark and, at length, even the Elector of Brandenburg himself made offensive alliances with the Republic. They all promised to supply troops, of which the Republic was to be the paymaster. Under these circumstances it was no longer possible for Louis to cling to his conquests on the Dutch frontiers. In April and May 1674 the French troops abandoned Zutfen, Arnhem, Nijmegen, the Betuwe, Schenkenschans and all the Cleves towns on the Rhine. Overijssel and Deventer were at the same time evacuated by the troops of Münster and Cologne. The Dutch Republic had thus recovered its essential independence. Of all Louis's boasted conquests only Maastricht remained in his hands.

CHAPTER XVI

Peace with England, Winter, 1673–1674

> 'It is strange that we and Holland should be divided by one whose interest is destructive to us both.'
>
> Sir William Coventry in the House of Commons, October 1673.

The growth of opposition to the Court and to the war had not been checked by Charles's withdrawal of the Declaration of Indulgence. All through the summer of 1673 Arlington watched nervously for any signs of improvement, and saw none. The campaigns at sea infuriated the nation, for they proved that the French were insincere in their alliance. A clever pamphlet, written by one Du Moulin, formerly in Arlington's office and now in the service of the Prince of Orange, entitled *England's Appeal from the Private Cabal at Whitehall to the great Council of the Nation*, was disseminated in England in March, revealing in a most unfavourable light the negotiations between Buckingham, Arlington, the King of France and the Prince of Orange in Holland during the previous summer. It showed how the English Ambassadors had allowed themselves to be made the tools of the French, had broken their promise to the Prince of Orange to try and modify the French terms, and had finally added to the impossible demands of France articles on behalf of England which they knew to be unacceptable. The reluctance of the Ministers to consult Parliament and their reckless methods in declaring war were unsparingly attacked. 'If for want of a Parliament,' they were represented as saying, 'we can have no English subsidies, we'll make a shift with 'French supplies; and if that does not serve the turn (observe

'the Gradation) we'll shut up the Exchequer. In the mean-'while the Smyrna and East India Fleets will fall into our hands. 'And when we have all that Treasure, who shall dare to find 'fault with us?' It was an attack so damaging and so unanswerable that Arlington, when an advance copy fell into his hands, tried to prevent its importation into England, but in vain. During the summer recess it was widely read, and joined with the ill-success of the campaign at sea, the failure of the Peace Congress at Cologne and the continued upkeep of an army that did nothing but 'hover' in the neighbourhood of London, to put Parliament in a defiant mood when it met in October. Arlington bribed and cajoled as many House of Commons men as he could into compliance with the Court, but the tide was running too strongly against the Government even for bribery to have much effect.

Had Charles really wished to prove his affection for Protestantism and so allay the fears of his subjects, he would not have permitted the marriage of the Duke of York with Mary of Modena. This took place by proxy at Modena on September 30, and was well known to be the work of the French King's personal influence with both James and the bride, whom he richly endowed. It created a perfect storm of fear and dislike in England, and was the subject of many bitter comments when Parliament met in October.

Louis was inclined in August to advise a prorogation, fearing, and not without reason, that the Dutch would work on the temper of Parliament to obtain a separate peace. But Charles was again in need of money, and Arlington, nervous though he was, and quite determined now to have nothing further to do with 'the great design,' hoped that 'when His 'Majesty shall have given them satisfaction in matters of re-'ligion, they will gratify him in all his other designs, and more 'expressly abstayne from enquiring into the motives of the 'War.'[1] His hopes were in vain, for neither Shaftesbury's

[1] State Papers, Archives 221, p. 373. Quoted Barbour, *Earl of Arlington*, p. 219 n., Arlington to the Ambassadors at Cologne, October 26, 1673.

somewhat blustering attempt to persuade them they were fighting 'pro aris et focis,' nor the King's own appeal, would induce the House of Commons to vote another supply. The supply voted in March was to have lasted eighteen months. Under the leadership of Sir William Coventry, the house resolved not to consider any further supply until the expiration of that time limit, 'unless it shall appear that the obstinacy 'of the Dutch shall make a supply necessary, nor before this 'kingdom be effectually secured from the dangers of Popery, 'and popish counsels and counsellors and the other present 'grievances be redressed.' The reference to Popery showed how far the Duke of York's projected marriage had gone to arouse again the old fears, which had been partially allayed in the spring by the passing of the Test Act. By a shrewd phrase, the House forced the Government to keep them fully informed of all that passed with Holland, and to hasten the consummation of a peace if they wished for a supply. The 'other present grievances' meant chiefly the standing army—'expensive, needless and terrible to the people'—not yet demobilised, though the summer had passed without bringing it into action. Indeed, as Marvell said, 'the House of 'Commons, not having been sufficiently prepared for such 'demands, nor well satisfied in several matters of fact, which 'appeared contrary to what was represented, took check.'[1]

That the Dutch were ready and willing enough to make peace was known to all, for a few days before Parliament met the States-General had addressed to Charles an open letter, appealing to him to end hostilities. They pointed out that, with the restoration of the Prince of Orange, all causes of quarrel between the King and the States had been done away; that they had offered to satisfy the King in every point which he had mentioned as a grievance in his declaration of war—the flag, Surinam, and the destruction of medals and portraits

[1] 'The people have received such strange impressions of religion and 'property that no professions of His Majesty of securing them for the future 'could at present cure them of the umbrages.' (H. Coventry to Williamson, November 17: *Letters to Sir J. Williamson*, Camden Society.)

made in honour of victories over England at sea. Instead of meeting them half-way the King had dishonoured the ambassadors sent in the summer of the previous year and driven the States to ally themselves with Austria and with Spain. The letter was temperately and adroitly worded, and published at the very moment when its effect on Parliament would be most telling. The Court was angry; Shaftesbury called it 'an 'appeal to His Majesty's subjects against himself'—which indeed it was.

Arlington's courage collapsed utterly when he saw the temper of Parliament. He was found by Colbert '*dans le* '*dernier abattement*' at the Commons' resolution—in abject fear, too, of an impeachment, for the House was already engaged in the pleasing task of naming 'evil counsellors.' Another prorogation was the only hope,[1] and the Houses were told on November 7 to reassemble in two months' time. On November 5 London showed its temper by lighting 'an 'incredible number of bonfires . . . 200 between Temple Bar 'and Algate.'[2] Arlington and Charles were no longer in a mood to resist the country. Peace must be made, and that quickly. The mediator was at hand in the person of the Spanish Ambassador, Del Fresno, who had been empowered by the States-General to negotiate a separate peace. At the end of November, Arlington told Colbert that the French alliance would soon be abandoned, and that because of the religious fears which were entertained of it. 'The entire 'ruin of the Protestant religion,' he said, was what Parliament feared; they were not deeply troubled either by fears of a war with Spain or pity for Holland. Of Charles he spoke with surprising candour: 'He has so lost the esteem of his subjects 'that all he says is neither believed nor feared.'[3] Louis saw that he could only preserve the English alliance by expending

[1] 'We hope they may at the next meeting be in a better temper.' (H. Coventry to Williamson, November 17, 1673.)

[2] *Portland Papers.*

[3] *Cf.* Temple to Essex, October 25: 'The King in all these matters is 'either so uncertain or so disgusted that those who are nearest to him know not 'yet what will be the issue.' *Essex Correspondence* (Camden Society), vol. i.

immense sums to supply what Parliament refused, and even so, such was the hatred of France, it was doubtful whether 'the ill humour of seamen'[1] could be overcome. Indeed, when Colbert offered a loan of twenty million *livres*, Charles received it 'as coldly as though I had offered him nothing 'at all.'[2] That very day Charles received the Dutch proposals through the Spanish Ambassador. They were different indeed from those which William had offered in the desperate days of 1672. They comprised the salute of the Dutch flag to all English ships in all the 'British Seas' (*i.e.* from Cape Finisterre to Norway) and an indemnity of 800,000 crowns. Charles determined to reply favourably to the proposals, and the separate negotiation was set on foot. Louis was deeply mortified. 'What do I see,' he exclaimed, 'but Spain, when 'I am at open war with her, becoming mediatrix in London 'between England and the States without consulting my 'interests.'[3] He did not consider that he had scarcely been at pains, during the past seven years, to consult those of Spain. Nevertheless, he preserved outwardly the strictest courtesy towards Charles, and even Arlington. He knew Charles was only yielding to irresistible pressure and had no wish to make him his enemy. He had his hands too full on the Continent to afford to lose the friendship of the English Court.

Parliament met again on January 7, 1674. Neither the diligent removal of Papists from the neighbourhood of the Court nor the substitution of the Protestant Ruvigny for the Roman Catholic Colbert in the French Embassy, nor the specious offer to lay before the House of Commons the Treaty of December 1671, to prove the absence of any religious motives in the French alliance,[4] could dispose the Commons to vote money. On February 3 Charles and Arlington determined

[1] *Essex Correspondence* (Camden Society), i. 101. [2] Mignet, iv. p. 246.
[3] Mignet, iv. p. 251, Louis to Colbert, January 3.
[4] This was Buckingham's proposal. The treaty of December 1671 was, of course, the same as the Treaty of Dover save that it omitted the articles about 'the great design.' Buckingham thought it was the original treaty.

to cut short the rising complaints about grievances, standing armies and evil counsellors, by placing before the Commons the Dutch peace proposals and asking their advice. Arlington told Ruvigny in private that the King had already determined to accept them. The House of Commons lost no time in debating the subject. Members spoke with much bitterness of France. 'An ally,' said Strangways, 'that made you raise 'an army and keep it here to no purpose.' 'No man,' said Garroway, 'loves Holland but for interest, nor hates France 'but as contrary to the English genius.' The House advised the King 'to proceed in a treaty with the said States in order 'to a speedy peace.' The treaty was signed at Westminster on February 19. From the point of view of the Dutch, the most important clause in it was that which forbade either party to assist the enemies of the other. England thereby withdrew her navy from the scene of action. Louis was sorry to lose a weapon of which he had hoped to make extensive use in conquering the Spanish Netherlands, whose coastline was as accessible to landings as that of Holland and Zeeland.[1]

A few days before the signature of the treaty, the fortunes of the Stadtholder received a further increase. The States-General declared the Stadtholderate and Captain-Generalship of the Union hereditary in the family of the Prince of Orange.

The Peace of Westminster must end this story, though after it the great continental war spread out for another four years, until the Peace of Nijmegen in 1678. The attitude of Charles II was but little changed, though his alliance with France was no longer permitted to him. He did what he could to show Louis that in inclination he was as French as ever. The English regiments continued in the French service, though by the treaty he had promised in no way to assist the enemies of the Republic. He also continued to receive money from France in return for prorogations of

[1] Louis to Colbert, December 20, 1673, Mignet, vol. iv, p. 246.

Parliament.[1] Louis, though he had deeply resented the separate peace with Holland, was careful to dissemble his disgust to Charles, and even before the treaty was signed wrote him a letter of fatherly forgiveness,[2] assuring him that his friendly sentiments were unchanged. William's efforts during the remainder of the war were directed towards changing this neutrality, so benevolent towards France, into an active declaration against Louis XIV, which would lead to a check on his ambitions and a peace favourable to the allies. Charles would never be persuaded, and as a consequence William was driven more and more into relations with the leaders of the opposition in Parliament,[3] since even Danby, who now succeeded Arlington as the King's most important minister, friendly though he was to William, could not prevent Charles from manifesting his preference for Louis XIV. Even in Parliament enthusiasm for an active policy on the continent was but lukewarm.

'It is true,' wrote Van Beuningen in September 1674, just before the Houses met for the autumn session, 'that the hatred against the French, a strong desire to see their power diminished, a great anxiety for the safety of religion and discontent over the conduct of the Court, are the general feelings of almost the whole nation. But at the same time this is joined with a silent satisfaction over the exhaustion of our State, the decline of our commerce and the great increase of theirs, and a flattering hope that we shall somehow restore the Spanish Netherlands (to Spain) without their help. So that, having considered all things, I am driven to the conclusion that at the meeting of Parliament no more can be expected than a connivance at our recruitings . . . and perhaps a request for the revocation of the English and Scotch troops in France.'[4]

Charles tried to draw William away from his interest in the House of Commons by dangling before him the bait of a possible marriage with the elder daughter of the Duke of York. This, he thought, would make a good Stuart of his

[1] Mignet, iv. pp. 367–70.
[2] *Ibid.* pp. 267–8.
[3] See Dalrymple's *Memoirs*, ii.
[4] Fruin, *Verspreide Geschriften*, iv. p. 42 n.

obstinate nephew. But William would have nothing to do with such a marriage, unless he could be certain thereby of obtaining England's co-operation on the continent. He told Temple, who returned to the Hague as Ambassador in March 1674, that it lay with the King of England to reduce France to the limits of the Peace of the Pyrenees : ' if he would not, the ' war must go on till some change happened in the condition of ' the parties.' William was indeed doomed to endless disappointment in his attempts to turn his uncle away from the influence of France. By February 1676, the two kings were almost as closely allied as ever against Holland, by a treaty signed and sealed with the utmost secrecy, while Charles posed in public as the ' mediator ' between the belligerent parties at the Conference of Nijmegen.[1] Well might William complain to Temple that ' nothing ever blew so hot and so cold as this ' Court of yours.'

The task which he had taken up in 1672, in ' the day of ' gloom and terror,' had indeed grown to terrible proportions. He had thought to preserve his country from destruction ; before two years were out he found himself faced with an apparently endless war, of which patriotism was no longer the simple and stirring motive. William III saw in Louis XIV the enemy not of Holland only, but of Europe. Without hesitation he gave up his life to defeating him. Never perhaps has a statesman clung so tenaciously to a cause which offered so little of romance, of glory, of positive results, to atone for its laboriousness, its complications, its barren round of campaigns and treaties, varied by the broken faith or slothfulness of allies, and the ever-recurring activities of an enemy who would not rest. William could not always depend even upon the Dutch politicians to support him. To a generation nursed in a great tradition of peace, the question of whether

[1] Mignet, iv. pp. 367–70 ; Christie, *A Life of Shaftesbury*, ii. pp. 210–11. By the treaty they promised to give no aid to one another's enemies and not to make peace save by mutual consent. It was known in England only to Charles, James and Danby. Danby disapproved, but was unable to prevent it.

or not Louis gained possession of another town or two in Flanders did not always seem of such supreme importance as it did to the Stadtholder. William's differences with powerful members of the oligarchy amounted sometimes to open quarrels.[1] But he was a wiser man than his father, and, even in moments of great anger, never attempted to impose his authority by illegal means, or plunge the State in civil war. The people loved him to the end. And when in 1688 he spoke to the States of Holland on the eve of his going into England to enter at last into the heritage prepared for him, his words were solemn and tender, filling his hearers with awe.

'Against you, my lords,' he said, 'whom I now thank most heartily for the help which you have given me and the trust you place in me, I have often shown bitter anger, when you would not see the dangers which I pointed out, and refused me the means which I thought necessary for avoiding them. Yet now we are at one. The danger, no longer to be mistaken, rises nearer and more threatening than ever, and has brought us together and reconciled us. God, the Almighty Lord, the searcher of all hearts, knows that I do not undertake this expedition for glory, ambition, or any particular advantage, but only to uphold Protestantism, now so sorely threatened, and also to maintain the freedom and right of a nation which so powerfully assisted the Netherlands in their earliest difficulties.'

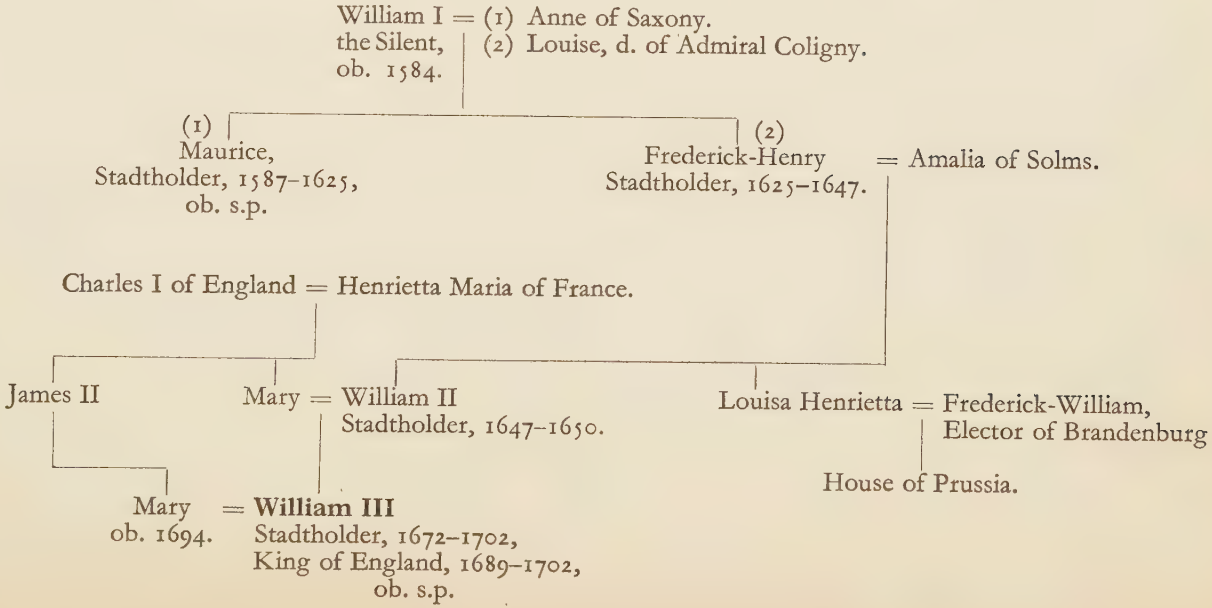
To some, this reference to the grudging help afforded by Elizabeth to the Republic in its first stormy years, may have seemed strange. A more recent occasion, when England had not helped, but had sought their destruction, may have been uppermost in their minds. But William was right in placing the interests of the two nations side by side. In 1672, and for

[1] *E.g.* his great and never-healed breach with Van Beuningen in 1683 (Fruin, *Verspreide Geschriften*, v. 116–7).

long afterwards, he had striven to convince his uncle of their common obligations against France. The crisis of 1688 was but the consummation of these early struggles, the fulfilment of the hopes of him who, as a boy, had 'raved so passionately 'after England,' and as a young and lonely defender of his country had known no grief more bitter than 'that the King 'of England, instead of helping him in his greatest distress, 'had sent over ambassadors who made a stricter league with 'France.'

THE HOUSE OF ORANGE IN THE XVIIth CENTURY.

Showing the Descent of William III.



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Printed in England at The Ballantyne Press
Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co. Ltd.
Colchester, London & Eton

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